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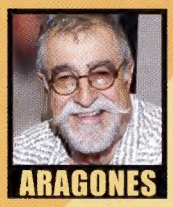
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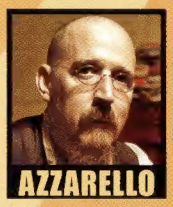
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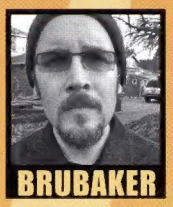
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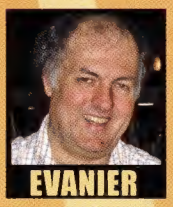
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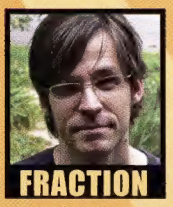
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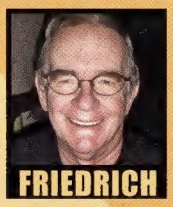
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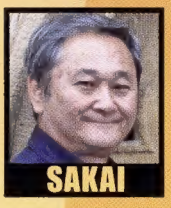
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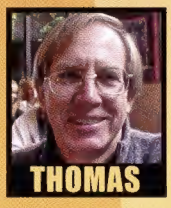
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Issue #1652 April 2009

WATCHMEN

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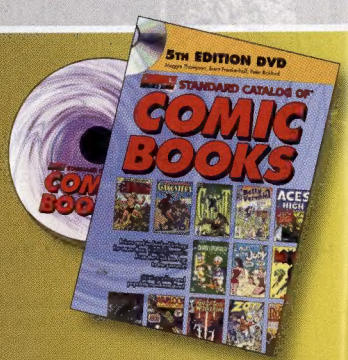

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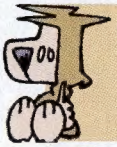

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Editorial

STILL WATCHING ...

The news came out in short reports, as 1986 began. In the Feb. 14 issue of ***Comics Buyer's Guide***, we identified Len Wein as the DC editor who was assigned to oversee *Watchmen*. In the next week's issue, Don wrote, "It looks as though 1986 is going to be one for the record books. I have extremely high hopes for Frank Miller's *Dark Knight* series and Alan Moore's *The Watchmen*; early reports on both are most enthusiastic."

Luckily for us, DC Comics public-relations person Peggy May sent us — long before the published issue was released — a preview of the series to come. The photocopies were terrible; the project was so captivating that we could hardly wait to see the next installment. The script by Alan Moore and the art by Dave Gibbons (whose book I hold here) came together to grab our attention from the first page to the last. And Peggy shipped the photocopies as soon as she received them.

In the April 18 issue, Don started his review column this way:

"The first item up is not only taken out of alphabetical order, it is not a review. I have been asked not to review *The Watchmen* until it gets a little closer to publication date, so I can't tell you that this forthcoming Alan Moore-Dave Gibbons 12-issue maxi-series from DC is *at least* as good as Howard Chaykin's *The Shadow* and Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight*.

"But, if I can't do that, I can at least tell retailers to increase their orders for this one. Those of you who were caught short on *The Shadow* and *Dark Knight* because you didn't order enough copies, pay particular attention to the next paragraph.

"When I *do* review *The Watchmen*, I am going to pull out all stops and use at least as many superlatives as I used on *Shadow* and *Dark Knight*. It is incredibly good, head and shoulders above most of Alan's previous work — and I bow to no one in my admiration for Alan's writing — and the art by Dave Gibbons is superb, easily *his* best work.

"In a year when DC has already had two 'hot' books (with John Byrne's *The Man of Steel* waiting in the wings), can you still under-order *The Watchmen* on the grounds that it's not from Marvel and therefore can't be a big seller? Think.

"As for the fans, I urge you to go to your comics shop now and reserve copies of all issues of *The Watchmen* now. Get it in writing, if you can, that copies will be saved for you at cover price."

Watchmen #1 went on sale June 5, 1986. ***CBG*** readers should have bought it. Did *you*?

— Maggie Thompson

After a couple years' hiatus, I had gotten back into comics when I arrived at college in the fall of 1984. Two years later, I'd made new friends who were also into comics, and one of them handed me the first several issues of *Watchmen*, asking for my opinion.

I remember reading the four or five issues over an evening and being impressed. Unfortunately, I didn't yet have an easy way to buy comics, so I had to wait until my friend (who was heavily into anything Alan Moore wrote) bought the other issues and let me borrow them. By the final issue, I'd finally begun to be able to buy direct-sale-only comics (like *Watchmen*) and anxiously awaited that last chapter. It was worth the wait.

When the trade paperback was released, I picked up a copy as quickly as I could so that I could devour the entire story in one place. That copy has traveled with me for more than 20 years, and, while I eventually obtained the Graphitti Designs hardcover and the recently released new DC edition, I'll never give up my well-read copy.

If I could purchase my ticket to the movie at this point, I'd have it in hand already.

— Brent Frankenhoff

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WATCHMEN evolved

MAKING THE MOVIE THAT COULDN'T BE MADE

by **MARC PATTEN**

It's taken more than 20 years for Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons' masterpiece to be made into a film — a process that, like the original comics series, has had its ups and downs in development hell.

"When the studio called, they're like, 'We have this film called *Watchmen* that we got from Paramount and we thought you might be interested in it.' "
— Zack Snyder, Director

The original premise for the *Watchmen* comic-book series was a modernization of the Charlton super-hero characters that DC acquired in the early 1980s. As Captain Comics details in a separate article in this issue, the story evolved into a best-selling original super-hero graphic novel.

So what does it take to interpret a comics series that many thought couldn't — or shouldn't — be made into a modern film? Many tried and failed. Sam Hamm, who wrote the script for 1989's *Batman* wrote an initial draft for 20th Century Fox that same year. While a valiant attempt, it failed to excite the studio enough to spend the money needed to produce it. It jumped to Warner Bros., Universal Studios, and Paramount Studios before finally coming home again to Warner Bros., home of DC, publisher of the original project. The political themes were altered, and at one point the story was altered to take place in present day.

The film also went through a who's who of well-known directors including Terry Gilliam, Darren Aronofsky, and Paul Greengrass, and stars including Arnold Schwarzenegger (as Dr. Manhattan), Sigourney Weaver, Daniel Craig, and even Simon Pegg (as Rorschach) were attached. But problems of outrageous budgets and creative differences would keep the film in development hell until the arrival of Zack Snyder in 2006. He had more passion for the project than any studio could have hoped and he brought the project back to its roots, 1985 setting and all.

Snyder, a self-professed comics fan beginning with *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* in the mid-1980s, gravitated to edgier comics as he exited his teen years, when, he said, he discovered *Watchmen, Batman: The Dark Knight,* and *Heavy Metal.*

When Warner Bros. approached Snyder about *Watchmen,* he said the executives had had no inkling of his love for the source material. He said, "It's funny, because, when the studio called, they're like, 'We have this film called *Watchmen* that we got from Paramount and we thought you might be interested in it. It's based on a comic book.' And I'm like, 'I'm aware of it,' as a big smile spread across my face.

Snyder recalled how the studio was amazed that, not only did he know what the story was about, but that he was a huge fan of the original comics. After mulling it over for a long time, the director agreed to take on the project — for fear, he said, that, if he didn't do it, someone with less passion might mess it up.

"Passion" is the word for how Snyder has treated the project. Besides having a new script written by Alex Tse, reported to be the most faithful adaptation of the graphic novel yet, the director proceeded to do what no other director in history has ever done in an adaptation (save,

Photos courtesy of Warner Bros. Picutres. ™ and © DC Comics.

perhaps, for Frank Miller's *Sin City*): He used the source material as a bible to make the film. As is the norm in film-making, traditional storyboards were done to show how the action in each scene progressed. However, according to many in the cast, a copy of the graphic novel rarely left Snyder's side.

Jackie Earle Haley (who plays Rorschach) said, "You would look over to the monitor, where Zack was working, and see the graphic novel in his hand. He was constantly referring to that. And it got contagious. Before every scene, I know that several of the actors, along with myself, would constantly double-check the scene in the book, to see what's going on in there."

Jeffrey Dean Morgan (who plays The Comedian) agreed. "[The graphic novel] became a passion for everyone," he said.

Between the time spent training and rehearsing and beginning to film, Morgan knew the graphic novel inside and out. The cast was studying the comics more than the actual script. "We'd all come to this conclusion separately, and then together, that we were filming the book."

Haley said, "I've done a few films based on books, and every now and then the book would be brought out while filming, but not necessarily a whole lot. Once in a while, I'd see a director look back at a paragraph or something. This was totally different: constantly referring to the book, before the scene, during the scene. As an actor, I was doing that. I'd watch Zack, and he was just constantly doing it, too."

Despite the heavy use of the original graphic novel on set, the script is reported to be extremely close to the original story and its visual elements — closer than any of the other versions over the past 20 years of development.

"It was very faithful," said Morgan. "I got the script and had the job in two days. It all happened really fast. First, I went in and met with one of the heads of Warner Bros. and, when I met with Zack next day, he offered me the job on the spot." Morgan added that he'd been overwhelmed sitting in Snyder's office for two hours watching, as the director went through storyboard after storyboard and costume after costume.

"The script was almost thrown away, once we got up there and started filming," he said. "We always had the graphic novel as our start. I barely remember ever looking at a script once I got the graphic novel."

It was always Snyder's goal in taking the director's job to produce the most faithful adaptation possible. He said, "I think any book that's been turned into a movie — like *Da Vinci Code* or *No Country for Old Men* — there's vast changes that get made, and I would say that our movie has far less changes than those movies from books."

When the film began production, Morgan said that the cast unfortunately began following rumors and comments by fans online, which they took to heart. "Half were concerned that we were going to mess it up and the other half were incredibly excited. But it was all about staying as true as you can to that source of material and not screwing it up. And, if that meant making it a three-hour movie, then that's what we'll do. I think Zack's final movie is going to be damn near four hours long when it's done. I wish that was the version you could open with in theaters; unfortunately the world doesn't allow that."

According to Snyder, the final running time has now been set at 2 hours, 38 minutes.

Haley said that Snyder never lost sight of the fact that they were filming a motion picture, and, while everyone strived to put as much of the original elements into the film, "There's no way we could put the whole thing in there."

While Alan Moore has disassociated himself from the film, original artist Dave Gibbons was very involved and worked closely with Snyder. "He's been super-supportive," Snyder said. "If anything, he's given me faith in my ability to know that the way I was approaching things was working. I know what I loved about the series when I read it, and I want that experience in the movie for people who've never read it. If I made a two and a half hour commercial for the book, then I've succeeded. All I can hope is that a whole new generation of people are exposed to the material. That's really ultimately what I want their experience to be."

Morgan and Haley found their roles in different ways. Haley heard via Internet rumors that he might be perfect for the role of Rorschach and began researching the character, even landing an early copy of the script. "The script was riveting," he said. "Then I got the book, went poking through, and it looked like the thing was going in a completely different way."

But things changed when Snyder came on board, and that's when Haley's agent suggested they become proactive. "So that's when I really started to plow into the book. I don't think I was completely finished with it before my audition tape had to get in."

Morgan went about things the old-fashioned way, where Snyder and the casting folks found him, but with a twist. "I never was sent the script. I received a photocopied version of the graphic novel, and that was my intro to it. I didn't even see it in color — Warners sent over a photocopy of the book and one scene from the script.

"That was my first sighting. I read it three or four times in the first day, maybe 17 hours'

"Before every scene, I know that several of the actors, along with myself, would constantly double-check the scene in the book, to see what's going on in there."
— Jackie Earle Haley (Rorschach)

"Trying to play [The Comedian] was the biggest challenge that I found — this incredible arc that he goes through — as he becomes his own man."
— Jeffrey Dean Morgan (The Comedian)

WATCHMEN
Want to read more from Morgan and Haley? Check out our website at www.cbgxtra.com!

worth. I'd never seen anything like it. It's an intense kind of multi-layered style of writing. It's a whole different thing looking at it in color. It kind of comes to life and jumps off the page. I knew what I was reading was very special."

Morgan may have studied his character, Eddie Blake (aka The Comedian), more than any other human on the planet. And, while The Comedian is far from a nice guy, the actor said he felt he's perhaps the most human of all the heroes. "The things this guy does are unredeemable; they are horrendous," he said. "I don't need to go into specifics. If you've read the novel, you know what they are. But, when you are done with the damn book, you don't hate this guy at all. If anything, you almost have sympathy for him, which I found absolutely fascinating. Trying to play that was the biggest challenge that I found — this incredible arc that he goes through — as he becomes his own man.

"There are a few scenes where I hope I did it, make the audience not hate him, and let the sympathy come through. There're a lot of things he does that you shouldn't have an ounce of sympathy for, but for some reason people do. *I* do. There are certain scenes that show he has a certain amount of honor. He's not this monster, but I think he found that out a little late in life."

Rorschach, another complex character, needs to see the world in ultimate truths, and Haley said, "What's so interesting about Rorschach is his recognition of and struggle with the human condition, his needs from a survival standpoint, and being a victim of such degrading behavior on his mother's part. Just to survive, he needed to have the strength of seeing things in black and white, and I think he tries to cut through that complexity that people often see behind in order to justify their self-centered behaviors."

Haley's fellow cast members have raved about his performance, but acting with a mask over your head isn't as easy as it looks to convey a character's emotions out to the audience. Haley explained, "I like to approach things, I think as most actors do, internally — and then you just hope that the outside part is kind of taking care of itself. Your main call as an actor — how people are perceiving you — is through your face and what they're seeing, what you're emoting through it. And it's kind of scary when you are working internally and you put a sock on your head. So I sort of approached it like that."

Haley said that he kept looking at himself in the monitor to get an idea if what he was trying to convey was showing. After many takes and discussing the scene with Snyder, he would redo scenes "bigger" until everyone was happy with the results.

Snyder said that the main reason the graphic novel is so compelling as a comic book is that Moore went all the way in developing the characters as full human beings. "It's not just a casual connection to them. He's taken them all the way to the end. When I started working on this and really start to pull it apart, this thing that I thought I knew — you come to find out that you barely understand it. It's its own thing. But it speaks to our world and everyone's own experiences so completely.

"I think *Watchmen* has stood the test of time. *Watchmen* keeps the characters real. What Moore *doesn't* do is say they're bad super-heroes. What he says is they're people. The first time I read it, I didn't expect it to go all the way because comics usually don't."

At the 2008 Comic-Con International: San Diego, the cast and 6,000 fans watched the footage and inaugural trailer for the first time. "When we saw that first trailer at Comic-Con, it sucked the air right out of us," said Morgan. "We just looked at each other and stared in awe. I'm a bit of a sentimental guy, and I got a tear in my eye, watching the trailer and the fans' reaction. It was a pretty amazing experience. I've never been a part of anything like that before.

"That whole thing was overwhelming. When we saw that footage, that's the first time we'd seen it — and, up on that stage, that's a year of our lives and longer for Zack. It was a pretty amazing moment. To me, that was the pinnacle of what's happened so far without seeing the film. That was a pretty tense moment, for sure. My favorite trailer happens to be the one from Comic-Con; I don't know exactly why that is — I love the score and I love the end of it."

While none of the actors have seen a final edited cut of the film, Haley said, "I think it's a brave piece and people are going to respond and dig it. I'm totally sucked into it. I could probably get in and see a cut now but I don't want to. I want to see it with all the effects added to it. I want my first time watching the whole thing to be with the effects and the sound. It may seem kind of geeky, but, yeah, when I saw the first trailer on the screen [at Comic-Con] and bits of footage, I was just floored. I can't wait to see it finished.

"I think the film's going to live up to fan expectations and people are going to find a really interesting approach to comic books. I think it's got this awesome entertainment element and addiction element and also got some really thought-provoking elements to put this on a different level from normal comic-book films."

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QUESTIONING (AND ANSWERING) THE WATCHMEN

by **ANDREW SMITH**
Contributing Editor

The story of how *Watchmen* came about in its original comic-book form is a fairly well-known one, but also one filled with rumor and conflicting reports. What's the true story? Here are answers to some frequently asked questions:

Q. *Was* ***Watchmen*** *originally based on the Charlton super-heroes?*

A. Yes.

According to a variety of sources, DC bought the rights to the Charlton action heroes in the 1980s, and *Watchmen's* original conception, when offered to writer Alan Moore, was the introduction of these characters to the DC universe. After Moore's proposal, though, it was obvious to Managing Editor Dick Giordano that there wouldn't be enough left of them to use in the future. But he liked the proposal, so he suggested the characters simply be changed. Moore did so — which actually gave him more freedom — although many still bear a resemblance to their progenitors:

• Rorschach was based on Steve Ditko's The Question, with elements of Mr. A thrown in. His last name, Kovacs, was selected because Moore thought Ditko seemed to have an affinity for K-named characters. His Manichean worldview was inspired at least in part by Mr. A, which was a reflection of Ditko's Ayn Randian politics.

• Nite Owl II was derived from Blue Beetle II, the Ted Kord character who's currently dead. There are obvious similarities between Beetle's Bug ship and the Owl ship, although other elements are reminiscent of Batman. Since there had been a Golden Age Blue Beetle, Moore threw in a Golden Age Nite Owl — which gave artist Dave Gibbons a chance to use a character he first came up with when he was 14.

• Dr. Manhattan was Moore's take on Captain Atom. As the only character with actual super-powers, it is his introduction that forever transforms the *Watchmen* world, which was one of Moore's themes. However, Moore changed the character's powers from nuclear-based to quantum-based, as it gave him more story angles. For example, from Dr. Manhattan's point of view, time is not linear.

• Ozymandias was inspired by Pete Morisi's *Peter Cannon, Thunderbolt.* Both appear to use 100% of their brains, instead of whatever percent it is normal people use.

• Silk Spectre II can be connected only tangentially to Charlton's highest profile female hero, Nightshade. "The Silk Spectre, in that she's the girl of the group, sort of was the equivalent of Nightshade," Moore said in an interview in *Comic Book Artist* #9 (Aug 00). "But really, there's not much connection beyond that." Moore said he was thinking more along the lines of Phantom Lady or Black Canary.

• The Comedian began life as Peacemaker, a character whose tagline was the oxymoronic "He loves peace so much he's willing to fight for it!" Elements of Marvel's Nick Fury and even G. Gordon Liddy informed the creation of the character, as well, Moore said in *CBA*, "those sort of barking-mad, right-wing adventurists." The name may have been gleaned from Graham Greene's *The Comedians.*

In *Watching the Watchmen* by Dave Gibbons (Titan Books, 2008), Gibbons said that Edward Blake's facial features were based on Groucho Marx, "the clown look having long been appropriated by Batman's Joker."

• Moore had had a vague idea of the *Watchmen* story in mind before being offered the Charlton characters and had toyed with using the Archie/MLJ characters, instead. That may explain certain odd similarities, such as Hooded Justice and Archie's The Hangman.

Q. *How did artist Dave Gibbons get attached to* ***Watchmen****?*

Dave Gibbons' art appeared on the box for Mayfair Games' miniatures for its Watchmen role-playing game module.

A. He simply asked for it, according to *Watching the Watchmen.*

Gibbons and Moore had met previously and discussed working on a project together. When he heard about *Watchmen,* Gibbons wanted to participate, cleared it with Moore, and then asked Dick Giordano at the 1984 Chicago comics convention if he could do it. Giordano's response: "OK, Dave, it's yours."

Q. *Where did the idea for the special features in the back come from?*

A. Editor Len Wein. According to many reports, DC had trouble selling ads for *Watchmen,* and house ads and a longer letters page were planned to fill the open eight or nine pages per book. But Wein felt that would be unfair to those who wrote in about the last four issues and suggested material that could fill in the backstory. Moore took the idea and ran with it.

Q. *Was there a* ***lot*** *of editorial input into* ***Watchmen****?*

A. No. Moore, Gibbons, and colorist John Higgins all lived in England, where a variety of sources agree that they worked almost entirely free of editorial supervision. Wein did initially object to the ending, which was reminiscent of Meyer Dolinsky's "Architects of Fear," a 1963 episode of *The Outer Limits.* Maybe it *had* been done before, Moore said, "but not by me" — and he won the argument.

Q. *Legend has it that the last issue of* ***Watchmen*** *was really late. Was it?*

A. By today's standards? No. But it was delayed.

The first issue was cover dated September 1986, so the final installment of a 12-issue, monthly series should have been cover-dated August 1987 — but was, instead, October. This was due to a skip month between #9 and #10, and again with #11 and #12, because the issue took more than a month to complete. And — according to Wein in a Sept. 20, 2008, interview with Comic Book Resources — Publisher Paul Levitz scheduled the book with only three issues complete, when Wein wanted six. Everyone was trying to avoid the delays that had resulted in fan unhappiness with *Camelot 3000.*

Q. *Where did* ***Tales of the Black Freighter*** *come from?*

A. It was initially a Gibbons suggestion, according to *Watching the Watchmen.*

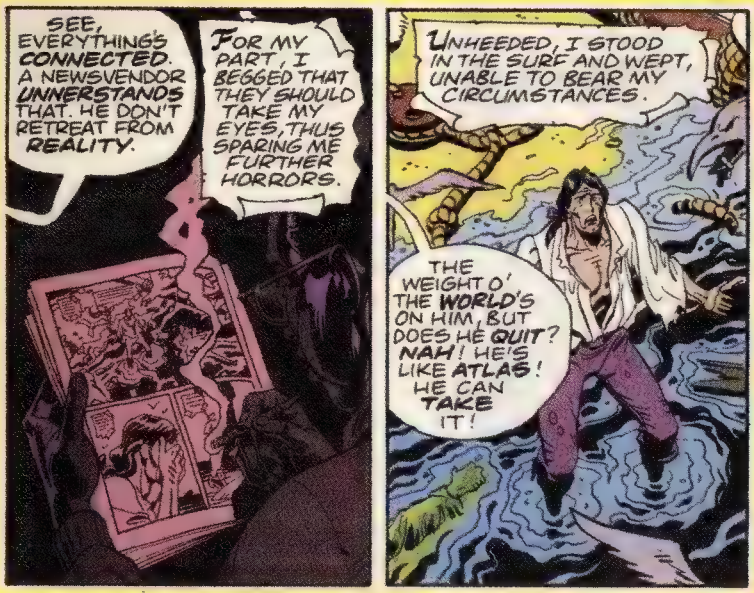
Given that super-heroes existed in the *Watchmen* world and weren't particularly popular, Gibbons reasoned that comic books would feature other genres — such as pirates. "Alan later took this small, throwaway idea and constructed an entire allegorical narrative from it within the main story," Gibbons said.

The allegory is to Adrian "Ozymandias" Veidt, who — like the main character in *Tales of the Black Freighter* — uses the dead bodies of his friends to achieve what he thinks is a benevolent goal. And, according to Moore in an Oct. 17, 2000, interview at blather.net, elements of the Freighter story also echoed in the capture of Rorschach and Dr. Manhattan's self-exile to Mars.

Q. *Did Moore and Gibbons choose Mars for Dr. Manhattan's self-exile because of the crater Galle, which looks like a smiley face?*

A. No — that was a happy accident. As was another geographical feature Gibbons found while researching Mars, the ridge called Nodus Gordii — Latin for "Gordian knot." Moore had previously introduced the Gordian Knot Lock Co., which also tied in to Viedt's fascination with Alexander the Great, who cut through the original Gordian knot.

***Tales of the Black Freighter*, the story within a story in *Watchmen*, was an allegory for a number of story concepts.**


SEE, EVERYTHING'S CONNECTED. A NEWSVENDOR UNNERSTANDS THAT HE DON'T RETREAT FROM REALITY.
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UNHEEDED, I STOOD IN THE SURF AND WEPT, UNABLE TO BEAR MY CIRCUMSTANCES.
THE WEIGHT O' THE WORLD'S ON HIM, BUT DOES HE QUIT? NAH! HE'S LIKE ATLAS! HE CAN TAKE IT!

WATCHMEN COMICS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. *Why did Moore and Gibbons use the constrictive nine-panel grid format?*

A. Moore wanted *Watchmen* to look like no other comic book, but at the same time to highlight the strengths of the medium. Gibbons chose the nine-panel grid format, which harkened back to Ditko's *Amazing Spider-Man* and Harvey Kurtzman's E.C. work. It also allowed Moore tighter control over the pacing.

VISITED TWO BARS BEFORE THIS. YOU MAY HAVE HEARD AMBULANCES. HOPEFULLY, LUCKIER HERE.
NEED INFORMATION. ADRIAN VEIDT SHOT AT. PRESS GAVE KILLER'S NAME AS ROY VICTOR CHESS.
DEAD NOW.

Q. *Who chose the color palette for* ***Watchmen****?*

A. Colorist John Higgins, for the most part.

Limited by the reproduction techniques of the mid-1980s, Higgins still struggled to give *Watchmen* its own look, stressing moodier, secondary colors. He finally got a chance to digitally enhance the colors so that he was satisfied with them in *Watchmen: The Absolute Edition* (2005).

Q. *It looks as if Gibbons has drawn everything* ***Watchmen****-related. Has he?*

A. Almost, which is close to miraculous. According to *Watching the Watchmen*, Joe Orlando drew the only illustrations in the original series not by Gibbons, for the *Black Freighter* article in *Watchmen* #5 (Jan 87). *Who's Who in the DC Universe* (Aug 90-Feb 92) featured *Watchmen* characters on two covers not drawn by Gibbons, and Kyle Baker drew a poster advertising *Watchmen* merchandise.

Q. *What awards has* ***Watchmen*** *won?*

A. Just about all of them. Two are especially notable, though. It made *Time's* list of the 100 best English language novels from 1923 to present — *all* novels, not just graphic novels. It also won a Hugo — in a special "Other Forms" category designated by the 1988 Worldcon.

Q. *Why has Alan Moore taken his name off the* ***Watchmen*** *movie?*

A. Moore has always expressed discontent with his comic books being turned into movies but he has washed his hands entirely of *Watchmen*, which he said he felt has been stolen from him. The original contract had *Watchmen* rights reverting to Moore and Gibbons when it went out of print — but it has never gone out of print, and DC has no intention of ever letting it do so. "Fair enough," Moore told *The New York Times* in a March 12, 2006, interview regarding his attitude toward DC. "You have managed to successfully swindle me, so I will never work for you again." He refused to participate in the 15th anniversary celebration in 2001 and in this year's movie.

Does WATCHMEN occur in the DC multiverse?

by JACK ABRAMOWITZ

It is well-documented that *Watchmen*, one of Alan Moore's *magnum opera*, bases its cast of characters on the Charlton action heroes, which had been acquired by DC. But the question remains as to whether *Watchmen* occurs in the DC multiverse. Simply having analogs of previously established characters does not necessarily make universes related. Members of The Squadron Supreme, for example, are doppelgängers of DC's Justice League but they are in the Marvel multiverse. (Similarly, Marvel is also home to counterparts of DC's Freedom Fighters, while the DC and WildStorm universes both play host to versions of Marvel's Avengers.)

Being published by DC is also not enough to establish the connection. Many series published by a given company are separate from its main lines. (DC published Moore's *V for Vendetta*, which does not occur in the regular DC multiverse. Similarly, there is no evidence to suggest that certain Vertigo realities, such as *Fables* and *Testament*, are in any way reachable from DC's "New Earth.") So can we establish *Watchmen* as part of the DC multiverse?

Sadly, *Watchmen* is not depicted in two of the most comprehensive multiverse-spanning works: *The Kingdom* and *World's Funnest*. The former established the concept of Hypertime (apparently since discarded) and brought the main DC reality into contact with the Tangent universe for the first time, as well as a variety of Elseworlds and Imaginary Stories (which are apparently not quite as imaginary as they once were). The latter ran the gamut from pre- and post-*Crisis* worlds to *Kingdom Come* to DC's animated reality. *Watchmen* was not established as a DC-multiverse reality in either of these.

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WATCHMEN COMICS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Perhaps the most widely known *Watchmen* appearance in the DC universe is "A Dream of Rorschach" in *The Question* #17. In it, the title character purchases a copy of the *Watchmen* graphic novel and imagines himself in the role of Rorschach (who was, in *Watchmen*, based on him). Does this in any way suggest that *Watchmen* occurs in the DC continuum? In favor of the theory, things that are a fiction in one world are often historical events on another. Not only did World War II-era events on Earth-2 show up in Earth-1 comics, but Earth-1 and Earth-S have bizarre reciprocity in which each can read of the other's exploits. (The phenomenon extends pretty far, as evidenced by The Man of Steel's cartoon on Marvel-Earth in *Superman/Fantastic Four*.) However, it would be quite a stretch to automatically assume that *every* comic book necessarily occurs in a parallel world. (What would we make of Earth-2's Superman pastiche, Geezer?)

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One odd appearance occurs in 1999's *DC One Million 80-Page Giant*. The 853rd-century Owlwoman is half-human and half-Qwardian. A member of Justice Legion A, Owlwoman is ostensibly an heir to the Crime Syndicate's Owlman, but for no apparent reason her costume is patterned after Nite-Owl's. Coincidence is unlikely. Is she somehow related to him? Or, like The Question, might she have been inspired by the *Watchmen* graphic novel?

Kingdom Come originally represented a potential future for the DC universe proper, though its events have since been relegated to Earth-22. *KC* is replete with *Watchmen* references, although it is difficult to place the events of one in the context of the other, since both realities' histories have been well documented and are mutually exclusive.

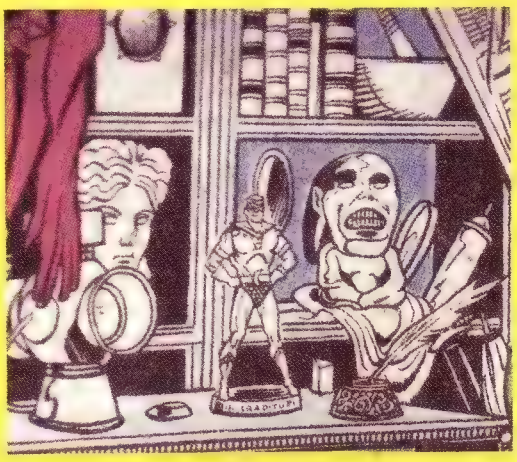
First, we must disregard "Who Watches the Watchmen?" graffiti (*KC* #1, page 7, panel 2) as meaningless. Such scribblings have been seen elsewhere around the DC multiverse, as well as outside of it, and they do nothing to establish *Watchmen* as a real event. (Reciprocally, we must disregard the Flash logo graffiti in *Watchmen* #3, page 2, as equally meaningless.)

More promising is the apparent appearance of Rorschach in *KC* #2's bar scene, breaking fingers as he does in *Watchmen* #1. But this cannot be the Rorschach we know, unless he was somehow transported to Earth-22. This may be within Doctor Manhattan's power to accomplish, but it's an awfully large leap to take without some indication to that effect in the text. That leaves us with the possibility that it is a DC-multiverse counterpart but also with the possibility that it is another graphic-novel-inspired wannabe.

Perhaps most promising is the presence of Hollis Mason's book *Under the Hood* in a store window (*KC* #1, page 7 again). This could be a similarly named work by a DC-multiverse counterpart *or* it could be Nite-Owl's actual autobiography, transported extra-dimensionally. (The latter suggestion is not so ridiculous, since *The Kingdom* established that the restaurant Planet Krypton was stocked with items from a wide variety of realities.) Either of these alternatives supports the hypothesis that *Watchmen* and the main DC reality are somehow related.

The most compelling argument, however, may come from 1989's *Hawk and Dove* #2, of all places. In it, the mysterious Barter has a curio shop stocked with a wide range of multi-dimensional artifacts (not all of them DC's). Aside from a tattered Superman cape and a Green Lantern Corps battery, he has the original Nite-Owl's "In Gratitude" statuette, prominently displayed on page 1. (He also has a blood-splattered smiley-face badge in his collection.) Barter has the ability and the motivation to gather items of significance from different realities, and, since the item in question is DC's (as opposed to The Ringmaster's hat and Buck Rogers' helmet), there is no reason to assume it is not what it purports to be.

At the end of the day, *Watchmen* has not been indisputably demonstrated to be part of the DC multiverse, but the presence of *Watchmen* artifacts on Earths-1 and -22, as well as the cross-pollination of similarly themed heroes, strongly supports the assertion that one can, in fact, "get there from here."



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Some merchandising tie-ins become wildly popular; others not so much

The Inactive Life of Captain Action

by **CRAIG SHUTT**

SUPERMAN • DC • NATIONAL COMICS
Captain Action
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
12¢
NO. 1
NOV.
STAND BACK, SUPERMAN! THIS IS A JOB FOR CAPTAIN ACTION AND COMPANY!
FEATURING DC's UNTOLD ORIGIN OF Captain Action!

Captain Action passed up the chance in his first DC issue to show Superman his cool Superman mask and costume, one of several elements of the Cap concept that probably confused toy fans.

Dear Mr. Silver Age,

I was a big fan of Clive Arno, the Silver Age Captain Action! Where did he come from and where has he gone since his late, lamented DC title bit the dust back in the day?

Matt M.
Space Station, Moon

Mr. Silver Age says: Your question is well timed, Matthew, for, after a rocky interim since Captain Action became inactive in 1969, he's back on the stands. Whether he'll have more success this time around can't be said, since, in both incarnations, he's faced an uphill battle. But if his current try is as interesting as his Silver Age activities, he'll be worth keeping an eye on.

Captain Action #1 (Oct-Nov 68), as any Silver Age fan worth his No-Prize well knows, was not the first we kids had heard of this hero. In fact, it wasn't even his first appearance in a comic book! That early publicity actually didn't completely aid his success, for, while it drew readers in, it also created a skeptical audience that had to be won over, in a time when super-heroes were on the slippery slope out of favor.

Cap began his career as one of the first "action figures," following in the path-blazing footsteps of Hasbro's G.I. Joe (fighting man from head to toe, on the land, on the sea, in the air). Joe, introduced in 1964, was the inspiration of toy designer Stan Weston, who had the innovative realization that boys would play with dolls like Barbie, with all those money-generating accessories, if the toys were targeted to their interests (*i.e.*, fighting and killing things).

Having proved spectacularly correct in his estimation, Weston sold the Captain Action idea to Ideal in 1966. This concept was even *more* imaginative but it created challenges that may have ultimately restricted the character's success. A licensing agent, Weston licensed characters from a variety of sources, creating costumes and rubber masks of the characters so Cap could become "The Amazing 9-in-1 Super Hero!"

It was an impressive group of licenses: DC's Superman, Batman, and Aquaman (a prescient

choice, as he was about to join Superman in cartoon adventures); Marvel's Captain America and Sgt. Fury (offering a cool setup for World War II adventures with our G.I. Joes); and The Lone Ranger (in a red and black outfit), Steve Canyon, Flash Gordon, and The Phantom.

Ad copy explained that kids could pose their "brave new hero" in "1,001 action positions" and change him into the various heroes. Captain Action came outfitted in a blue and black military-like costume, complete with hat and boots, with a reasonably cool CA emblem on this chest. His accessories consisted of a ray gun and a short sword, a nasty piece of work that any boy would've been proud to use to spill his sister's guts. Fortunately, it was made of plastic.

Then, as the saying goes, the costumes and accessories were sold separately: in boxes with plastic windows framed by four-color art by Murphy Anderson. Those costumes and boxes can still make the hearts of Silver Age comics fans thump. Cap definitely got an A+ in accessories, but his grade for story concept was not quite so high. He wasn't helped by the head sculpt, which made him look like a bemused 40-year-old.

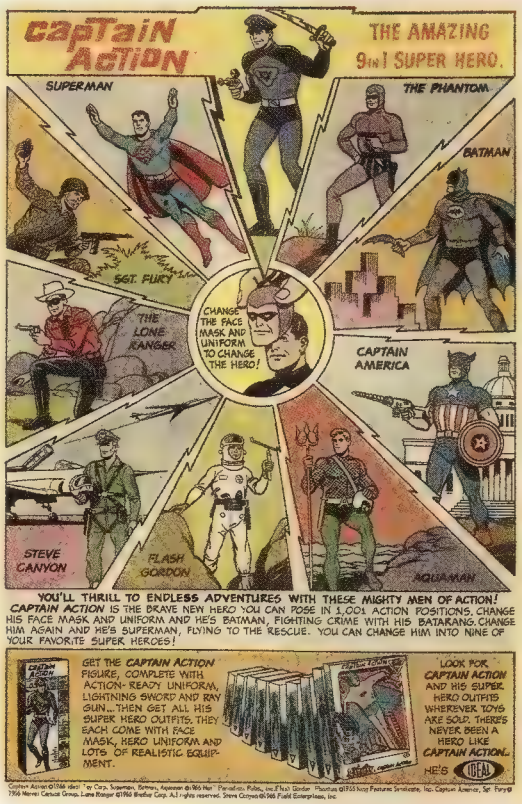
That paled beside G.I. Joe (a young-looking guy with a scar on his cheek, no less), who was part of an army. Having a dozen Joes was not overdoing it, because he had so much equipment that each guy could specialize his weaponry, and he needed buddies to win the war, as did all military men. Soon, Joe was available in multiple hair colors, to avoid the nagging suspicion that our Joe Army had resulted from a mad scientist's cloning operation gone bad.

Captain Action, though, was just one guy — and the rationale for why he put on a mask to become Superman or Flash Gordon was tough to figure, even for kids who were eager to swallow anything (as our Mopee Awards annually attest we were).

Granted, you could dress up Captain Action as nine different heroes, and you never needed to remove the mask to reveal he was Cap underneath, thereby giving you 10 heroes for the price of one (plus costumes and accessories). But having more than one Captain Action running around took some kind of imaginative storytelling (not that kids couldn't make that work). And once you were putting a mask and costume on Captain Action, who was to say that it wasn't really a volunteer from the G.I. Joe army under there? Plus, those masks were never as realistic as comic-book rubber masks were, making it tougher to suspend our disbelief and see Superman instead of someone pretending to be Superman.

Even so, the notion of being able to create stories starring a 12-inch Superman, Batman, or Captain America (sorry, Aquaman!) made a pretty compelling toy for 1966 comics fans — especially as Batmania ratcheted up through that year and into the next.

Comics readers were well aware of the captain, since he was promoted in full-page ads running in DC comics dated January 1967 (just in time for 1966 Christmas lists). The ads showed all 10 heroes along with Cap's own box and the Batman costume box. The ads complemented G.I. Joe pages that had been running most regularly in a series of black and white ads (on the inside back cover) that depicted Andy and George having a ton of fun with all kinds of expensive accessories.


CAPTAIN ACTION
THE AMAZING 9-in-1 SUPER HERO.
SUPERMAN
THE PHANTOM
BATMAN
SGT. FURY
THE LONE RANGER
CHANGE THE FACE MASK AND UNIFORM TO CHANGE THE HERO!
CAPTAIN AMERICA
STEVE CANYON
FLASH GORDON
AQUAMAN
YOU'LL THRILL TO ENDLESS ADVENTURES WITH THESE MIGHTY MEN OF ACTION! CAPTAIN ACTION IS THE BRAVE NEW HERO YOU CAN POSE IN 1,001 ACTION POSITIONS. CHANGE HIS FACE MASK AND UNIFORM AND HE'S BATMAN, FIGHTING CRIME WITH HIS BATARANG. CHANGE HIM AGAIN AND HE'S SUPERMAN, FLYING TO THE RESCUE. YOU CAN CHANGE HIM INTO NINE OF YOUR FAVORITE SUPER HEROES!
GET THE CAPTAIN ACTION FIGURE, COMPLETE WITH ACTION-READY UNIFORM, LIGHTNING SWORD AND RAY GUN...THEN GET ALL HIS SUPER HERO OUTFITS. THEY EACH COME WITH FACE MASK, HERO UNIFORM AND LOTS OF REALISTIC EQUIPMENT.
LOOK FOR CAPTAIN ACTION AND HIS SUPER HERO OUTFITS WHEREVER TOYS ARE SOLD. THERE'S NEVER BEEN A HERO LIKE CAPTAIN ACTION... HE'S IDEAL

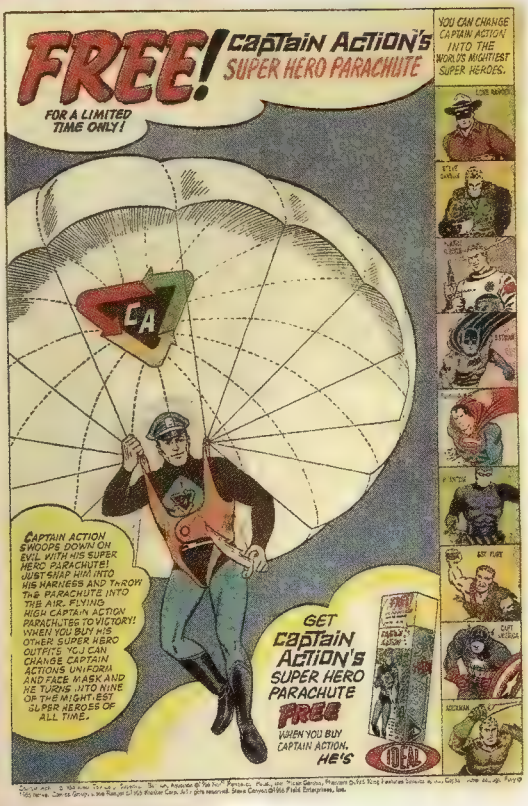
The Cap ad two months later promoted the limited-time offer of a free parachute packaged with Captain Action figures. The ads depicted his hero lineup down the side, using existing art (including Kirby art on Fury and Captain America).

No doubt building on its initial success, Cap's heroic line-up expanded in 1967 to feature Spider-Man (an excellent choice), Green Hornet, Buck Rogers, and Tonto, along with The Lone Ranger in his TV blues. Flicker rings were added to the costume packages, and additional accessory packs were introduced, including the Silver Streak amphibious craft with firing rockets (of course). These accessories didn't really fit with any heroes beyond Cap, indicating a shift toward making him stand on his own two articulated feet (well, ankles), even as his hero selection expanded.

A scenario for how Captain Action used his various identities was presented in a four-color, 32-page pamphlet inserted with 1967 figures. The pamphlet consisted of one tier of comics panels, between one and three per page, drawn by Chic Stone. The adventure began with a boy named Jimmy receiving Cap and all his accessories (scoring him a ton of Videomatic flicker rings) for his birthday. Savoring his gifts, he fell asleep dreaming of his hero.

The dream featured Cap battling weird,

Ten heroes in one articulated toy body was a cool idea, as ads in 1967 DC comics showed, but creating a story concept required considerable kid imagination.


FREE! CAPTAIN ACTION'S SUPER HERO PARACHUTE
FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY!
YOU CAN CHANGE CAPTAIN ACTION INTO THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST SUPER HEROES.
CAPTAIN ACTION SWOOPS DOWN ON EVIL WITH HIS SUPER HERO PARACHUTE! JUST SNAP HIM INTO HIS HARNESS AND THROW THE PARACHUTE INTO THE AIR. FLYING HIGH CAPTAIN ACTION PARACHUTES TO VICTORY! WHEN YOU BUY HIS OTHER SUPER HERO OUTFITS YOU CAN CHANGE CAPTAIN ACTIONS UNIFORM AND FACE MASK AND HE TURNS INTO NINE OF THE MIGHTIEST SUPER HEROES OF ALL TIME.
GET CAPTAIN ACTION'S SUPER HERO PARACHUTE FREE WHEN YOU BUY CAPTAIN ACTION. HE'S
IDEAL

The offer of a free parachute with every Captain Action figure purchase, as advertised in DC ads, suggested that kids thought one Cap was enough, since they could use the costumes with volunteers from their G.I. Joe army.

white, oval-headed, one-eyed aliens by dressing up (and gaining the powers) of each hero in turn, ideally matching the challenge to that hero's skills. Most pages featured a new hero, with the final image showing the package for the costume or accessory pack used in that segment.

It began with Cap, sitting in his mountain headquarters, noticing missiles plummeting to earth, so he rocketed up to meet them with his Power Pack accessory. Realizing he was outgunned, he retreated to HQ and fired his Inter-Galactic Jet Mortar (even though the threat was confined, not only to one galaxy, but to his own atmosphere). He then used his Directional Communicator to, um, radio "Earth" to prepare for an invasion. (Righty-oh, Brezhnev no doubt radioed back.)

To fool the invaders into thinking they had "plenty of opposition," which they no doubt would have had once "Earth" responded to his alert, he began swapping costumes. First, he used a variety of bat-gadgets as Batman to kayo a missile, then switched to Buck Rogers and then Flash Gordon to take out a few more.

He switched to Superman, gaining his powers, but then continued to swap clothes to become Captain America, Steve Canyon, Aquaman, Green Hornet, The Phantom, The Lone Ranger, Tonto, and Spider-Man. Frankly, I'd have stuck with Big Blue.

Then, Action Boy joined the fray, changing to Superboy, Robin, and Aquaboy. The aliens skedaddled, thoroughly demoralized that one guy and a kid could beat them so easily while changing clothes every few minutes. And little Jimmy awoke, vowing to never again eat pepperoni and pineapple pizza before bedtime.

Clearly, creating a plausible scenario for this hero-changing concept wasn't easy, and it's doubtful too many kids recreated the comic's plotline. But for one bright, shining moment, Captain Action was a cool idea, even if it took real imagination to work.

By 1968, the super-hero fad had cooled significantly, and the licensed super-hero connection was jettisoned. Ads in December 1968-dated DC comics showed Captain Action being threatened by the evil menace of Dr. Evil, a blue-skinned alien-looking guy with (gulp) an exposed brain. To the rescue came the space-suited Action Boy, who zapped Evil with his ray gun, saving the day.

Into that faded excitement came DC's *Captain Action* #1. Clearly, the original nine-in-one super-hero concept was a non-starter, since DC wasn't about to pay for all those licenses, even if it could have acquired them. The concept already had been phased out of the figure line in favor of Action Boy and Dr. Evil, which provided the base for a comics series — if someone could figure out how to connect the dots.

The creator given that challenge by Editor Mort Weisinger was his wunderkind star, Jim Shooter, who famously had begun writing for Weisinger at the age of 13 in 1965. Shooter liked coming into the concept from the beginning — but he discovered a host of restrictions, as he wrote in the first issue of Moonstone's recent revival (more on that later).

The dictates, he wrote, were to give CA "Shazam-style mythological powers, an Action Cave, a sidekick, a car, a pet panther, for Pete's sake, and more." He didn't say whether these dictates came from his editor, the publisher, or the license. Some, of course, derived from the toy line. But the demand for Shazam-style powers is a head-scratcher.

Shooter wrote that he received a big boost when Wally Wood was assigned the art chores. A side benefit was that Woody inked in credits for both himself and Shooter on the splash page, and Weisinger — who was not a fan of crediting his creators — didn't remove them. "Probably because Woody was who he was," Shooter surmised. "You just didn't mess with Woody." It was Shooter's first splash-page credit, he noted.

The story they created showed promise. It opened with a rip-roaring Wood slugfest, as Captain Action battled Krellik, who dressed in a skintight, lime-green leotard, darker green trunks, and brown boots: not the most flattering costume, master criminal-wise. The battle, featuring energy bursts and much boulder-throwing, ended in a stalemate, giving them a breather while we flashed back to their beginnings.

We learned Cap was Clive Arno, an archeologist on a dig with Krellik when they discovered a chest of ancient coins depicting gods from a wide range of cultures. After touching a coin, Arno gained super-strength, which he quickly realized came from the coin. While cleaning the coins, the two were thrown back through time (or had a vision, your choice) to learn that Odin had created the coins with his god buddies. They were leaving

Earth, the exposition-loving deity summarized, even though everybody around him already knew it, so the coins would be left for a worthy to use for good.

Upon returning to the present (or waking up, your choice), Krellik immediately tried to steal the coins, being evil and all. (Arno, bushed by all that learning about unlimited power within his reach, had decided to go to bed. Yawn.) But, Man-Thing like, the coins burned at Krellik's touch, and he ran off into the ruins — where he just happened to find the coin belonging to Chernobog, the Slavic god of evil (aka Loki).

With the basics set, the story took an interesting twist. Krellik sneaked back into camp and saw Arno creating a super-hero identity for himself. Returning quickly to America, Krellik committed crimes in the guise Clive planned to use to help others.

Soon, Clive returned home to greet his just-graduated son, Carl, and their pet panther, Khem. Sure. He revealed his costumed identity, which shocked Carl — because he'd seen reports that someone in that uniform was robbing museums! Cap figured out what was happening but, rather than take the easy way out and create a different identity, he decided to stop Krellik and reclaim the identity he hadn't yet even established.

That probably wasn't the smartest idea, but Cap never did anything nice and easy. He had several strikes against him, especially being a toy tie-in, which never screamed high-quality concept to readers, even back in the gullible 1960s when it was a new idea.

One letter-writer, a Mr. Carl Gafford (known to comics fans today as a colorist), noted in #5 that DC was doing a "slightly weird type of innovation" by taking a toy and producing a comic about it rather than producing a comic that became so popular it had a toy line created for it. DC had done it before, when it featured G.I. Joe — using generic war reprints — in *Showcase* #53 (Dec 64) and #54 (Feb 65). But Cap was given his own title straightaway, albeit with only a five-issue run planned for the first license, according to Michael Eury, who has written a book about the captain.

Cap's other big drawback came from his "Shazam-style mythological powers." While it allowed Shooter to throw around arcane religious figures (many of whom were the same with different names in each culture), it made it difficult for readers to keep up. They couldn't predict how Cap would handle any danger, because there was no limit on his powers.

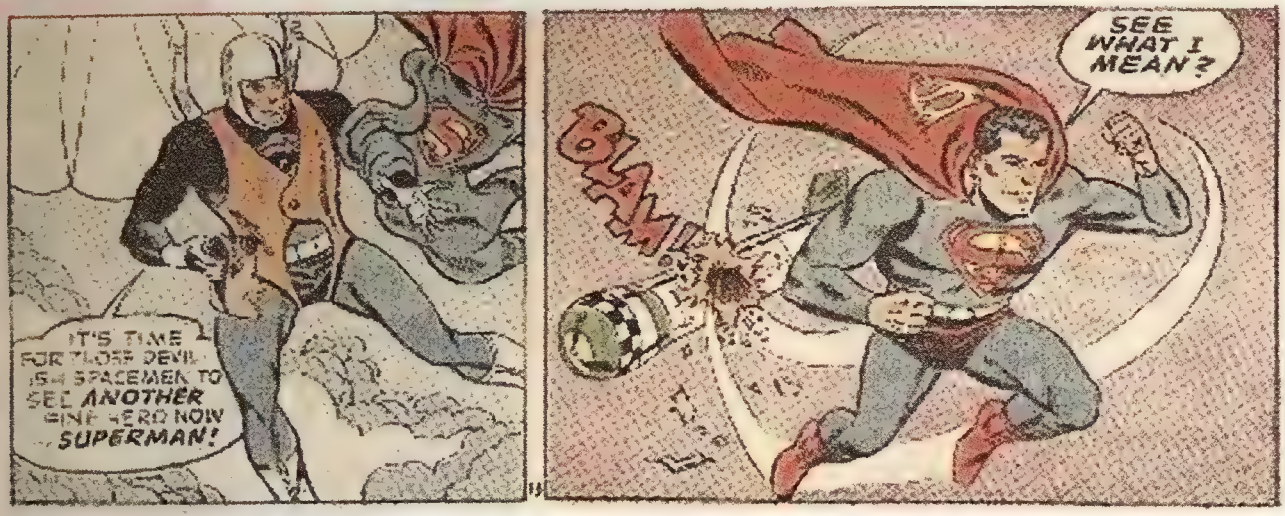
In the first issue, coins featured Odin (wisdom), Tyre/Mars (courage), Tlaloc (weather), Vulcan (fire), Vidar (strength), Hermes/Mercury (speed), Sol (light and heat), and Thor (lightning). That's a lotta powers, especially when they were unmentioned until used.

Another surprising element was the cameo appearance by Superman in #1, including a cover spot. It made Cap a definite part of the DC universe, which did him little good, since a licensed character wasn't going to pop up in other titles. It added some familiarity for comics-buying kids, but it may have led to the expectation that Cap would dress up as

Captain Action and Action Boy meet Dr. Evil
I... I CAN'T MOVE! WHO ARE YOU?
I AM DR. EVIL! AT LAST... YOU'RE IN MY GRASP.. HEH.. HEH!
HA! I HAVE IONIZED YOU... NOW MY THOUGHT-SENSOR WILL CONTROL YOUR MIND!
WHO WILL SAVE Captain Action NOW..!!?
Action Boy!
MY REDUCER WILL FREEZE YOU, ACTION BOY!
MY RAY-GUN IS STRONGER!
ZAP!
THANKS, ACTION BOY!
I'M GLAD I WAS IN TIME TO FOIL DR. EVIL!
THERE'S MORE ACTION AHEAD WHEN YOU ACT OUT YOUR OWN CAPTAIN ACTION ADVENTURES!
GET DR. EVIL... ALIEN FROM ALPHA CENTURA! HE COMES WITH DISGUISES TO HIDE HIS EVIL DEEDS... HE COMES WITH EVIL OUTFIT AND EVIL, EVIL THINGS!
GET CAPTAIN ACTION... GET HIS CRIME-FIGHTING ACCESSORIES.
ACTION BOY COMES WITH HELMET, KNIFE, RAY GUN AND PANTHER
GET ALL THE ACTION WITH CAPTAIN ACTION, ACTION BOY, AND DR. EVIL! THEY'RE
IDEAL

By 1968, Cap was being promoted in DC ads as a stand-alone hero battling alongside Action Boy to counter the villainy of Dr. Evil.

A pamphlet inserted into costume and accessory packs later in Captain Action's career tried to create a scenario for how Cap used his variety of hero costumes.



In his first-ever comics story (in his pack inserts), Cap shucked his parachute and switched to Superman, gaining his super-powers, and later changed into his Tonto costume because, um ...

Superman, and that idea had already faded.

Supes arrived at the crime scene to stop Krellik but was shoved aside, as Captain Action took on his doppelgänger. Krellik escaped, a result that became standard for Cap's super-doing, as Superman demanded answers, something you'd think he could've gotten if he really wanted.

Cap tracked down Krellik (who switched to his lime-green ensemble), leading to the slugfest that started the issue, and the issue ended with Cap defeated! Issue #2 (Dec 68-Jan 69) picked up from there, adding the inestimable Gil Kane on pencils with Woody inking.

KRELLIK! LOOK! AN ANCIENT CHEST!
ROTTING WITH AGE! IT'S HALF-EATEN AWAY! ITS CONTENTS PROBABLY CRUMBLED TO DUST LONG AGO!
NOT THESE CONTENTS! THEY'RE COINS... PRETTY BADLY CORRODED... BUT WE CAN CLEAN AND POLISH 'EM! I'LL BET THEY HAVE THE FACE AND NAME OF THE RULER OF THIS PLACE!

With Cap out of action (pun intended), Krellik stole the four coins Cap had been using (Sol, Thor, Vidar, and Hermes), somehow overcoming the burns that had prevented the same theft at the archaeological site. And then, like all criminal masterminds, he decided that humiliating Cap was better than killing him, and flew off.

In Captain Action #1, archaeologist Clive Arno uncovered a cache of cool old coins that gave him a multitude of undefined super-powers.

That decision, as we all know, would come back to haunt him but kept the title going.

A disguised Krellik went to Arno's home and attacked Carl. Arno returned home and used hidden coins for Heimdall (super-senses), Odin, Tlaloc, Vulcan, and Mars to battle Krellik with the help of the newly minted Action Boy. He later used the coins of Quetzalcoatl (mystic alarms, I'm not kidding), Vata (wind), Pluto (gravity), and Kora-Okami (snow). Yikes.

Kane/Wood mayhem ensued, as Krellik kept hiding until Cap would find him and pound him until he escaped again. The battles featured Cap driving around in the Silver Streak, which also was featured on the cover. It was a gratuitous use, considering that, when Krellik attacked, Cap flew up out of the Streak to battle him in the air. The car was a sweet Cap toy accessory and looked pretty cool swooping around on the cover but it looked pretty dorky cruising around city streets inside the comic.

The hits just kept on coming between our two foes right to issue's end, when Cap recovered his stolen coins but let Krellik escape.

The title (which only had a five-issue license, remember) was only two issues old when major changes occurred. First, Julius Schwartz replaced Weisinger as editor, which necessitated a change in writers, because that's the way things worked back then. Schwartz turned the scripting reins over to artist Gil Kane, who thanked his editor in the first letter in the book's new *Action Line* column.

But he also professed that he'd encountered a problem: The issue introduced Dr. Evil, whose toy included a rubber mask of a Caucasian man. But the mask didn't affect the rest of his skin, so it looked mighty weird to have a Caucasian guy with blue hands and skin. Kane said he couldn't solve the riddle and appealed to readers for help.

A page of their responses ran in #5, and Kane no doubt received many more than could be printed, given that he offered an

original drawing of Cap for the best response. The winner was never announced, because Schwartz promised to announce the results in the next issue, and we all know how *that* turned out.

But, in the meantime, Kane took an intriguing approach to introducing the aforementioned evil guy by making it a family affair and focusing on familial relationships during his three-issue run. Evil, it turned out, was the father of Clive's dead wife and a Nobel prize winner who lent his lab to Arno for experiments on his coins. But as Clive and Carl ran their tests, Dr. Tracy was working on experiments of his own. Sadly, they went awry when an earthquake opened a dimensional rift and turned him into the blue-skinned alien-like dude from the toy line. Don't you just hate that? It also changed his attitude, such that he thought Dr. Evil was a cool name.

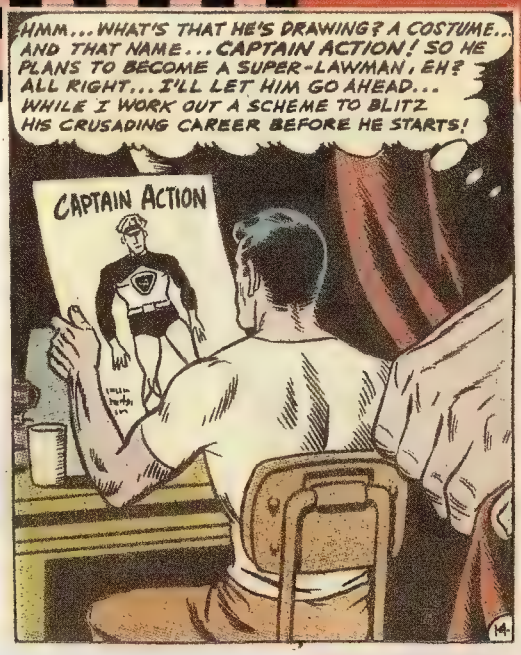
The earthquake handily destroyed all of the magic coins, except for the Mercury coin and three others (Zeus, Hercules, and Heimdall), which fused together. Clive gave Mercury to Carl and kept the fused trio, limiting and defining his powers considerably more.

The pair went to battle Dr. Evil, who had returned to Earth, used his Dr. Tracy mask to disguise himself, and decided to manifest his evilness by remaking northern California for his own purposes. After failing to stop the physical forces at work (getting Action Boy hurt in the process), Clive innocently asked his father-in-law for help, only to be captured by Tracy's alter ego. Cap broke free and they battled, with Evil's human mask oddly appearing and disappearing randomly during the fight.

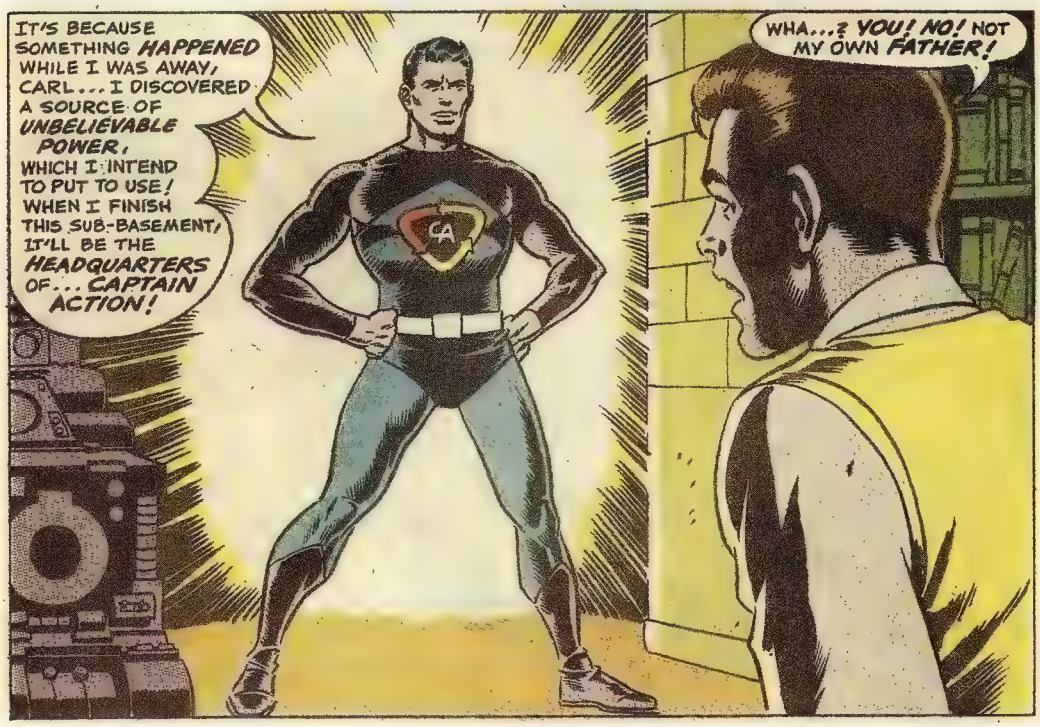
In the end, Arno was left holding an empty mask, which showed that Dr. Evil would return. It marked the third straight issue in which Captain Action had failed to capture the villain.

Issue #4 (Apr-May 68) opened with Evil gaining an alien world full of followers with which to invade Earth. To soften up his foes, he attacked Captain Action and Action Boy telepathically, creating images of vile monsters. When that failed, he upped the ante by tracking down the "frozen-energy after-essence" (say what?) of Arno's wife — aka his own daughter.

He animated her essence to use against Cap and was overwhelmed by seeing his daughter revived. But he overcame his sentiment to turn her into his tool. What an evil guy! He used the image to try to turn Captain Action insane while Evil wreaked havoc on Earth. Finally, Action Boy snapped Clive out of it (slapped him out of it, technically), and they battled Evil — with an assist from Evil's alien followers, who'd had second thoughts upon seeing what their leader was doing.


HMM... WHAT'S THAT HE'S DRAWING? A COSTUME... AND THAT NAME... CAPTAIN ACTION! SO HE PLANS TO BECOME A SUPER-LAWMAN, EH? ALL RIGHT... I'LL LET HIM GO AHEAD... WHILE I WORK OUT A SCHEME TO BLITZ HIS CRUSADING CAREER BEFORE HE STARTS!
CAPTAIN ACTION

In *Captain Action* #1, Arno's evil fellow archeologist Krellik learned that Clive had big plans for his new powers upon returning to civilization.


IT'S BECAUSE SOMETHING HAPPENED WHILE I WAS AWAY, CARL... I DISCOVERED A SOURCE OF UNBELIEVABLE POWER, WHICH I INTEND TO PUT TO USE! WHEN I FINISH THIS SUB-BASEMENT, IT'LL BE THE HEADQUARTERS OF... CAPTAIN ACTION!
WHA...? YOU! NO! NOT MY OWN FATHER!

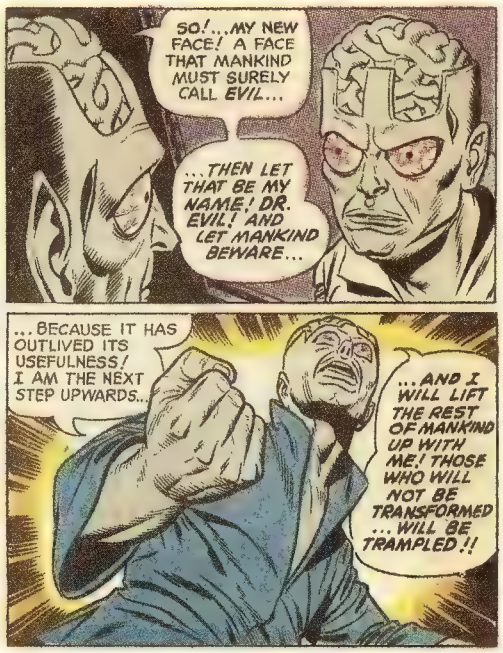
Clive's son Carl was shocked to learn that his father was Captain Action in issue #1, because Krellik already had usurped the identity.

SUDDENLY...
IN THAT CASE, KRELLIK, YOU WON'T MIND RETURNING MY COINS!
WHA...? CAPTAIN ACTION!
AND HIS PARTNER, ACTION BOY!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING
8

In *Captain Action* #2, Cap and Action Boy tracked down the attractively costumed Krellik, allowing mayhem to ensue again.

Issue #5 (Jun-Jul 69) introduced another familial relationship, as a fanatic rabble-rouser roused the rabble. He hid his true identity from the world and his son, a friend of Carl, in a not very plausible way: His hate and madness contorted his face so he was unrecognizable, and he put on a skin-tight costume. Even Superman would laugh at that one. Ultimately, the man's son gave his life to stop the evil schemes of his disguised father, causing Pops to go insane, just as Evil had tried to do with Cap in the previous issue with his own loved one. Cap and Action Boy mopped up the action as their grief-stricken foe sobbed over his son's lifeless body.

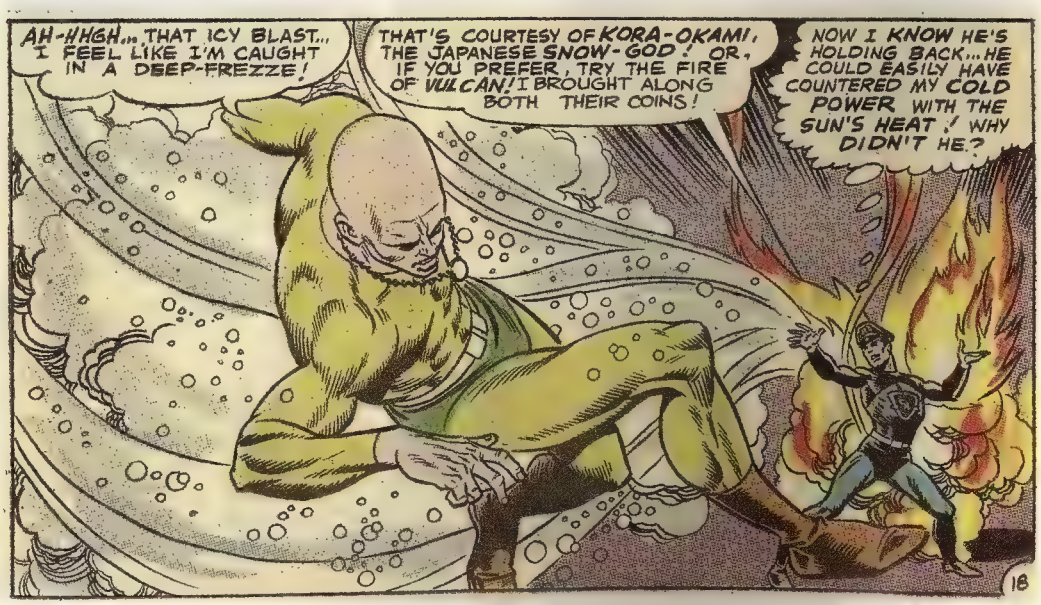
That, unfortunately, was the end of the series. It showed considerable promise, especially given that it served as a training ground for writer Kane (who received credited plot assists from Schwartz). But the ill-defined nature of Cap's powers and his inability to actually capture a foe made him seem a bit tentative. The art remained top-notch to the end.

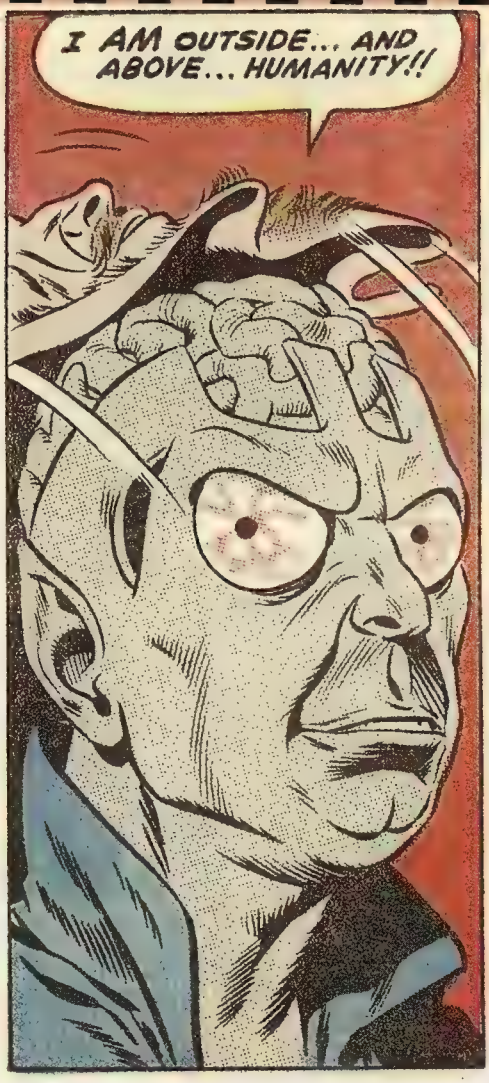

SO!...MY NEW FACE! A FACE THAT MANKIND MUST SURELY CALL EVIL...
...THEN LET THAT BE MY NAME! DR. EVIL! AND LET MANKIND BEWARE...
...BECAUSE IT HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS! I AM THE NEXT STEP UPWARDS...
...AND I WILL LIFT THE REST OF MANKIND UP WITH ME! THOSE WHO WILL NOT BE TRANSFORMED ...WILL BE TRAMPLED!!

In *CA* #3, Cap's father-in-law accidentally transformed himself into Dr. Evil, no relation to the Austin Powers evildoer, despite the uncanny resemblance.

With super-heroes fading, the Captain Action toy line discontinued, and licensed comics costing more and having more restrictions than company-owned titles, DC didn't renew its license. That was the last we saw of Cap until he

Cap showed off some of the multitude of unknown powers he had at his command in *CA* #2, expositorily outlining how he was using them for Krellik's benefit.


AH-HHGH... THAT ICY BLAST... I FEEL LIKE I'M CAUGHT IN A DEEP-FREZZE!
THAT'S COURTESY OF KORA-OKAMI, THE JAPANESE SNOW-GOD! OR, IF YOU PREFER, TRY THE FIRE OF VULCAN! I BROUGHT ALONG BOTH THEIR COINS!
NOW I KNOW HE'S HOLDING BACK... HE COULD EASILY HAVE COUNTERED MY COLD POWER WITH THE SUN'S HEAT! WHY DIDN'T HE?
18



Dr. Evil enjoyed wearing his Dr. Tracy rubber mask, which he randomly whipped off and on throughout his climactic battle with Cap in *CA* #3.

was revived as the leader of an espionage team in the black-and-white *A.C.T.I.O.N. Force* #1 (Jan 87) from Lightning Comics. That was followed by *Captain Action* #0 (1995) from Karl Art Publishing, which was inserted into *Space Bananas* #1 as a preview of a new series (which never arrived).

Captain Action has again returned to the stands, thanks to the efforts of diehard Cap fans Joe Ahearn (who gained fan fame for customizing new costumes for Cap) and Ed Catto of Captain Action Enterprises. They are publishing a new series through Moonstone, which by year's end had seen two issues (#0 and #1) and a 32-page illustrated origin novella, *First Mission, Last Day*.

The first two issues have barely gotten Cap off the ground, with #0 featuring a 13-page introductory story and #1 providing only a 10-page story with two unrelated backups. The concept tips its hat to the original identity-swapping bit but it goes off in its own direction to set up an original storyline.

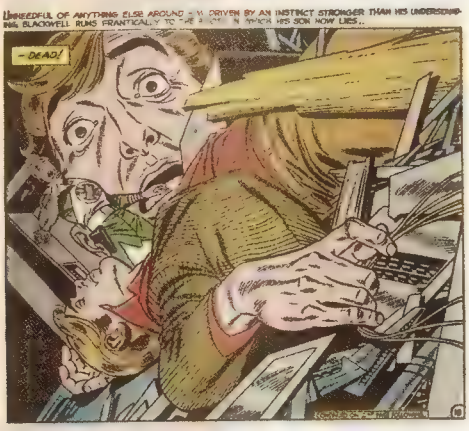
An alien virus invaded Earth many years ago but was defeated — or so officials thought. Instead, it took over the minds of the world's five super-heroes, who bided their time helping humanity and then secretly struck, killing Arno and obliterating the organization he headed. That left only Clive's son — who we later discover is *not* Action Boy — to fight the hidden menace that has infected an untold number of earthlings. His weapons are his own fighting abilities and a disguise mechanism that allows him to take on the shape and powers of any of the "heroes" — but only for a limited time.

The stories by Fabian Nicieza show promise, and the art by Mark Sparacio works well enough, although these opening stories mostly set things up, requiring lots of scenes of people talking. A

Readers discovered that Dr. Evil still had a human streak in *CA* #4, when he reanimated his own daughter (and Cap's late wife) to use in his evil plan to take over the world.

CARRYING THE SURVIVORS TO SAFETY, CAPTAIN ACTION DESPAIRS AT THE MANNER OF BEING THAT COULD UNLEASH SUCH PAIN AND RUIN...
I KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE/ EVEN IF HE IS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED, HE CAUSED IT BY HIS RABBLE-ROUSING SPEECHES!
A POWER-MAD FANATIC--A POISONOUS HATE-MONGER...
CA
...MATTHEW BLACKWELL! HE MUST BE STOPPED!
3

Captain Action faced the danger of a guy with a big mouth (and a spandex costume) in *CA* #5.

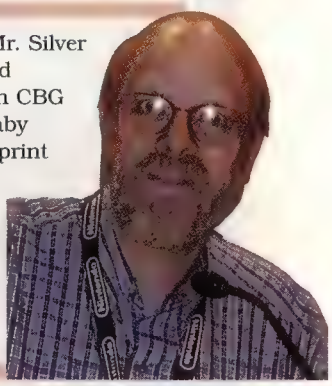

UNHEEDFUL OF ANYTHING ELSE AROUND HIM, DRIVEN BY AN INSTINCT STRONGER THAN HIS UNDERSTANDING, BLACKWELL RUNS FRANTICALLY TO THE SCENE IN WHICH HIS SON NOW LIES...
- DEAD!

major battle in #0, which takes place with the new Cap naked in bed with two women, indicates the audience for Captain Action has grown a little older than the Silver Age version was, no big surprise.

An evil rabble-rouser learned that words can hurt even more than sticks and stones if you aren't careful in *Captain Action* #5.

The plotline uses the original Cap concept more than the Silver Age version tried to do, but it has a ways to go to match the Silver Age version's modest run, if only in page count. As with the original, it faces challenges, including a comics world in which independent titles have a difficult time gaining attention. Considering that Captain Action never defeated any of his Silver Age foes, including the dreaded license-renewal monster, it would be a first for Cap to be a true victor. But I'll be rooting for him.

Moonstone's recent *Captain Action* #0 reintroduced our hero to a new comics audience, one that has to be won over just as the original had to do back in the day.



Known to fans worldwide as "Mr. Silver Age," **CRAIG SHUTT** has waxed nostalgic about comics of old in CBG since 1992. His latest book, Baby Boomer Comics, is now out of print but remains available at online bookstores, eBay, and flea markets internationally. Send comments and suggestions to craigshutt@ameritech.net.

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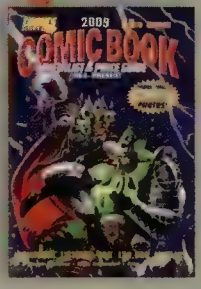

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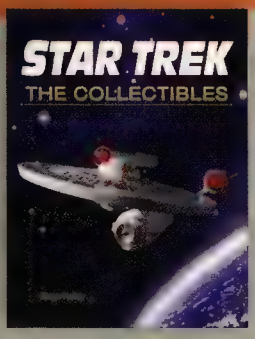

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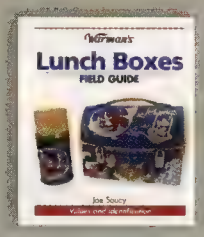

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A history of Will Eisner's best-known creation

"SPIRIT"ED DEBATE

by ANDREW "CAPTAIN COMICS" SMITH

Dear Cap: I just saw the horrendous *Spirit* movie and was wondering if it was true that the character started off as a comic inserted in newspapers? Also, how many different companies have published his adventures? I also remember a previous film in the '70s that was pretty bad. And what other characters did Will Eisner create? Weren't there also other rip-offs of The Spirit, like The Masked Man from Eclipse and Midnight from Quality? Please advise.

— ***Nelson Jimenez***
Stamford, Conn.

The Captain *responds:* My condolences, Nelson, on spending money on Frank Miller's *The Spirit*. Let's move on and take your questions in order:

Q: *Is it true the character started off as a comic inserted in newspapers?*

A: Yes. Here's what I wrote for my newspaper column just before the movie premiere:

"The Spirit began in 1939, when a young Will Eisner was churning out pages for the nascent comic-book industry. Eisner was approached by the Register & Tribune syndicate, which was worried that this newfangled field was stealing a march on newspaper comic strips. They had a unique proposal: A 16-page comic book, tabloid size, syndicated and inserted into major newspapers nationwide every Sunday.

"Eisner took the leap. 'By 1939 I had long been convinced that I was involved with a medium that had real literary potential,' Eisner wrote in the foreword to *Will Eisner's The Spirit Archives* Vol. 1 in 2000. 'I had decided to spend my life at this, but I was trapped in what to me was a comic-book ghetto. ... Newspaper syndication would give me an adult audience and the opportunity to write and draw more sophisticated material.'

"Which he did. From 1940 to 1952, Eisner produced the 16-page 'Comic Section' every

WHAD'YA WANT?
AND BY THE WAY, I NOTICED ANOTHER ITEM..."NO FREE LUNCHES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN"..NO MONEY, SO I'M TAKING UP A LITTLE PRIVATE COLLECTION FOR THEM!
OH, Y'WANT T'SHAKE US DOWN FOR DOUGH!
YOU GET IT! YOU'RE A LOT SMARTER THAN I THOUGHT, SLOT!

The Spirit's look has remained basically the same from his earliest appearances (above) to his latest incarnation from DC (left).

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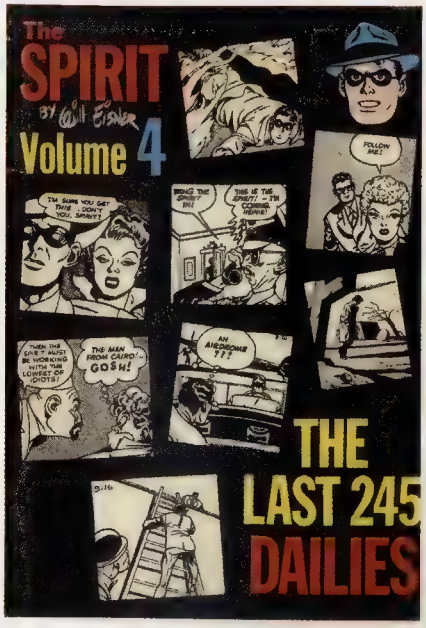


The Spirit's adventures have been collected and reprinted by a number of publishers, including (left to right): Harvey, Ken Pierce, and Kitchen Sink (the last in at least two different comics incarnations as well as a magazine-sized version).

Sunday like clockwork. It contained five pages of Bob Powell's 'Mr. Mystic,' four pages of Chuck Mazoujian's 'Lady Luck,' and seven pages of a fellow named The Spirit."

I guess it's probably bad form to quote oneself, but there you go.

Q: *How many different companies published his adventures?*

A: A lot.

Years ago, ***CBG*** readers and I tried to figure out which character had been published by the most companies. If memory serves, Phantom Lady won the blue ribbon for original adventures, but, if you include reprints, it's The Spirit.

From a cursory search (primarily the Fourth Edition of ***CBG***'s *Standard Catalog of Comic Books*), I find 12 publishers: Boardman Books (UK), DC Comics, Dark Horse, Fiction House, Harvey Comics, I.W./Super, Ken Pierce, Kitchen Sink Press, Quality, Register & Tribune Syndicate, Warren Publishing, and Will Eisner. It would not surprise me to find one or two more out there somewhere.

Q: *Was there a* ***Spirit*** *film prior to the one released in 2008?*

A: Yes, and it was just as bad as you remember.

Michael Schultz directed a campy TV movie in 1987 that was a pilot for a possible series. Starring Sam "Flash Gordon" Jones as the titular character, with Nana "Major Kira" Visitor as Ellen Dolan, it was set in modern times (although the men still wore fedoras). Other major characters included Laura Robinson as P'Gell and Bumper Robinson as Eubie (not Ebony) White. Needless to say, it was not picked up for a series.

Q: *What other characters did Will Eisner create?*

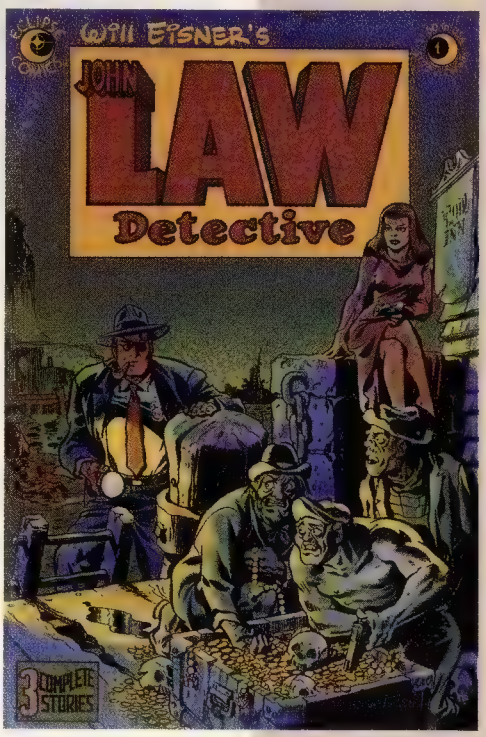
A: For *Wow!* magazine, Eisner created the superspy Harry Karry and the pirate The Flame. As co-owner of Eisner & Iger Studio, which cranked out pages for Quality and Fox (among others), he created or co-created the pirate strip *Hawks of the Sea* (born from The Flame); the short-lived Wonder Man (which DC sued out of existence); Sheena, Queen of the Jungle; The Diary of Dr. Hayward; Uncle Otto (in "bigfoot" style); Lady Luck; Mr. Mystic; Blackhawk; Uncle Sam; Doll Man; and probably many more. After the war there were *John Law* and *Joe Dope* (for the Army), and then the parade of graphic novels.

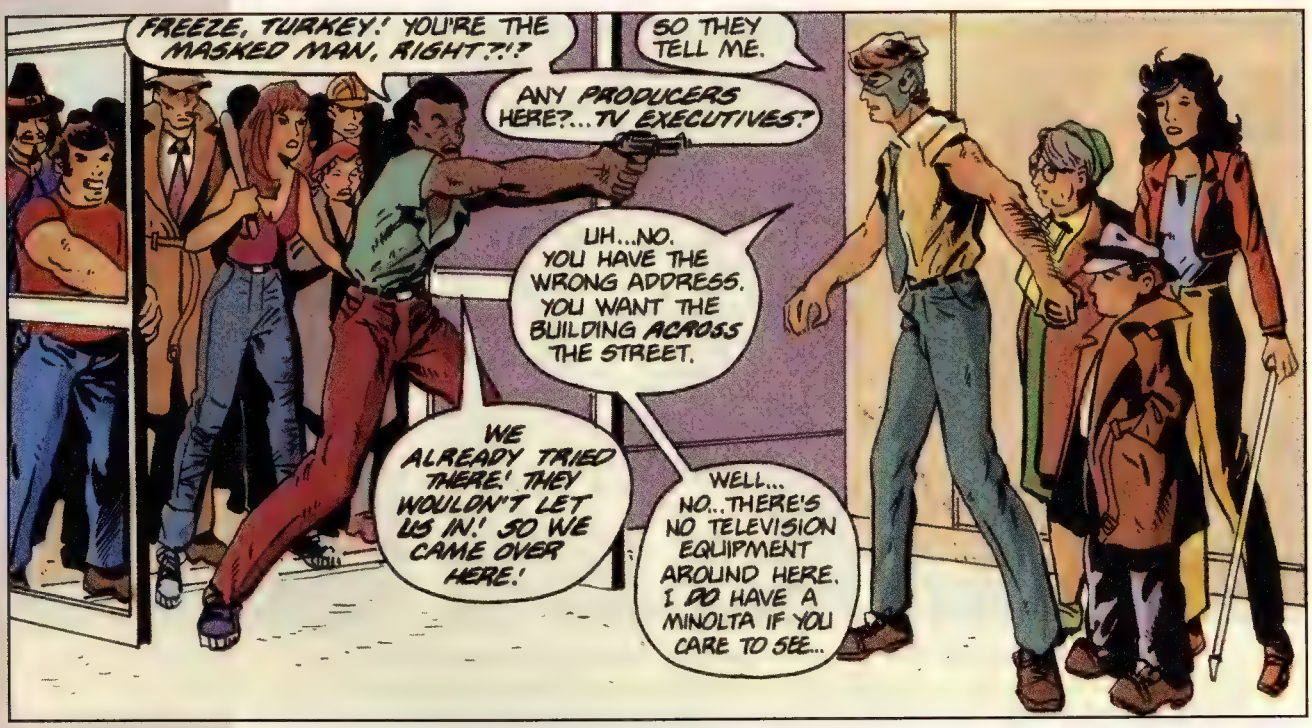
Q: *Were Midnight and The Masked Man rip-offs?*

A: It depends on your definition.

Midnight was created in 1941 by Jack Cole (of Plastic Man fame) at the behest of William "Busy" Arnold, publisher

Eclipse reprinted the adventures of Eisner's John Law (below) as well as those of Spirit-inspired hero The Masked Man (next page).




FREEZE, TURKEY! YOU'RE THE MASKED MAN, RIGHT?!?
SO THEY TELL ME.
ANY PRODUCERS HERE?...TV EXECUTIVES?
UH...NO. YOU HAVE THE WRONG ADDRESS. YOU WANT THE BUILDING ACROSS THE STREET.
WE ALREADY TRIED THERE! THEY WOULDN'T LET US IN! SO WE CAME OVER HERE!
WELL... NO...THERE'S NO TELEVISION EQUIPMENT AROUND HERE. I DO HAVE A MINOLTA IF YOU CARE TO SEE...

The Masked Man had some similarities to The Spirit, and I would characterize it as an homage more than a swipe.

of Quality Comics. There was this little war going on, see, and Arnold was worried about young men getting drafted and never coming back. This was particularly problematic with Will Eisner, since he owned the rights to The Spirit, which could die with him. So Midnight was created as a sort-of back-up to The Spirit in case Eisner got killed. Which didn't happen, and Arnold eventually reprinted The Spirit also, so Quality at one time was printing the stories of two guys in domino masks and blue suits. Presumably, Eisner was OK with this arrangement, since he continued to do work for Quality while Midnight ran.

As for The Masked Man, he was created by B.C. Boyer and ran in various Eclipse titles, including his own, from 1982 to 1988. The Masked Man had some similarities to The Spirit, and I would characterize it as an homage more than a swipe. This feeling was reinforced when The Masked Man met The Phantom Man, an older crimefighter in blue gloves who was clearly meant to be Denny Colt. And The Masked Man had a number of differences from The Spirit that were sufficient, in my view, to make him a distinctly different character.

Although your mileage may vary.

Dear Captain: I totally agree with your explanation of why *Amazing Spider-Man* is so wrong now, as you mentioned in ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** #1649 (Jan 09). I have collected *Amazing Spider-Man* for more than 30 years and it has become hard to read. I buy it out of force of habit now, not because I like the book. I find the book confusing; the character is out of step with the rest of the Marvel universe. I don't understand how Doctor Strange or some other wizard can't see right through the chicanery and figure out that there is something odd about our beloved Spidey.

As for bringing back Harry, mutilating Flash, and putting in new characters that no one knows, I can't bring myself to care. I know that one day some writer will trash the whole thing and bring back Spider-Man to the day that Aunt May got shot and all the stuff that he went through after that will just be a dream. It will happen; they even dropped a hint when Mary Jane whispered sweet somethings to the Devil.

As for the writing itself, well, I've seen it all before. The Shocker, The Molten Man, Green Goblin are all likable villains, to be sure, but I want to see them in present-day context, not in this *faux* reality in which Spidey is living a lie. This is the core problem with the title: Spider-Man is a hero who cannot face the consequences of his actions. It is the same as Tony Stark turning to drink; Spider-Man went to his local alternate-reality dealer and got hooked up.

So why should I — or any long-term *Amazing Spider-Man* reader — care any more about the title? Marvel saw that *Amazing Spider-Man* was outselling the rest of the Spider-Man titles and decided to cancel the rest and make *Amazing* a weekly. Well, the reason that was the most popular title was that longtime fans like you and me made it that way. *We* continued buying, even when they reset the origin to make Peter Parker a chosen one rather than a guy like us who happened to be in the right place at the right time. But, with it being almost weekly and not even about

HyAAAHH!
OW! OW! OW! I THINK I PULLED SOMETHING
THAT'S IT. THAT'S EVERYTHING I GOT. EVER WONDER WHAT "PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH OF A SPIDER" MEANS?
TODAY IT MEANS THE SIDE OF A BUILDING. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT? THAT'S MYTHIC. THAT'S THE STUFF OF LEGENDS. THAT'S--

KEEP AWAY FROM HIM!
BUT HE LOOKS HURT--
DON'T YOU READ THE PAPER? HE'S A SERIAL KILLER!
--PAR FOR THE COURSE. HAVE TO REMIND MYSELF IT DOESN'T MATTER. I'M NOT DOING THIS FOR CHEERS AND CURTAIN CALLS.
I DO THIS BECAUSE I HAVE TO. BECAUSE THAT'S THE MAN I CHOOSE TO BE. THE GUY WHO LOOKS OUT FOR--
LOOK! OVER THERE!

my Spider-Man, I am seriously thinking of giving up the title. After more than 30 years of collecting it, I find that it is no longer worth my cash to buy it. They didn't even have the decency to bring Gwen Stacy back, whom I still miss.

— Stephen Nolan
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

The Captain *responds:* You know, the one thing I found interesting when I read about "Brand New Day" was whether or not they'd bring back Gwen. Not because I pine alone at night for her return; her death was more than 30 years ago, and there's been a lot of webbing under the bridge since then. Her return would be incredibly problematic.

And that was sort of what interested me; it would be a heckuva problem for whoever wrote the book. And I like watching writers struggle — and succeed — with difficult concepts. Alan Moore does that sort of thing all the time and it's amazing to watch.

Of course, not all writers are Alan Moore, which is probably why they didn't do it.

Anyway, I'm doing my best to separate the origins of "Brand New Day" (that out-of-character deal with the devil thing) from its execution. And, when I do, I can see that the title is improving.

For one thing, they're telling original stories now, instead of the early "BND" tales, which slavishly followed Editor Tom Brevoort's Spider-blueprint. It was an excellent blueprint, and I enthusiastically agreed with most of it, but it was only a framework. The writers needed to stand on it as a foundation but then tell original tales that would entertain fans both old and new. I see that with more regularity now, which makes the stories more entertaining. And that's sorta the idea, so huzzah.

Of course, that deal with the devil will stick in my craw forever. And I'm not sure where my craw is, but it's obviously a painful place. Until such time as it's retconned away by a future creative team — which, as you note, is probably as inevitable as sunrise — I'll try to compartmentalize it and hope for the best.

And now an addition to our TOE (Things On Eyes) discussion from reader Dan Shrensky's question in ***CBG*** #1649 (Jan 09), by one of the industry's finest inkers:

Dear Cap: I worked on a Malibu Comic series in the mid-'90s called *Siren*, and she had the eye make-up thing over her left eye. I believe she was designed by Mike Zeck, appeared in *Ultraforce* by George Pérez, and then I inked her over Kevin J. West on the limited series and John Fang for the one-shot special.

Jim Starlin created Gamora in the pages of *Strange Tales/Warlock* in the mid-'70s with the eye stuff. I remembered because I worked on the *Warlock and the Infinity Watch* Marvel title in the early to mid-'90s.

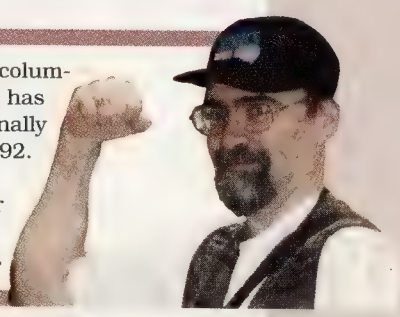
— Bob Almond

The Captain *responds:* Thanks, Bob! The more examples we have, the easier it is to follow the transformation of TOE from fad to standard.

And, while you're on the "phone," let me plug your current work on *Star Trek: The Last Generation* for IDW, and the Inkwell Awards. Almond and company shine a spotlight on the invaluable work of inkers with Inkwells, so click over to *inkwellawards.com* to check it out. And tell 'em The Captain sent you!

I'm doing my best to separate the origins of "Brand New Day" from its execution. And, when I do, I can see that the title is improving.

Nationally syndicated columnist **ANDREW SMITH** has been writing professionally about comics since 1992. He can be reached at *capncomics@aol.com* or on his message board, *www.captaincomics.us.*



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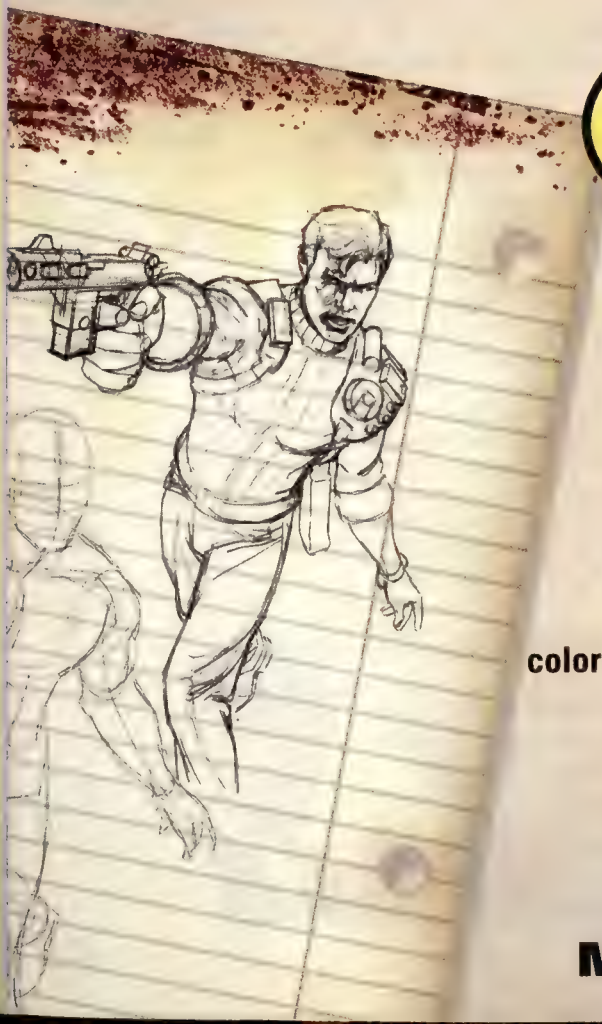

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PART 3

Webcomics school

Going online: Seeing and being seen

by JOHN JACKSON MILLER

Having covered some of Chuck Fiala's and my own experiences at webcomics' conception and initial startup, I'll close the topic this month with some of our observations on promotion. So far, we've just put the car on the road — but readers are the gas in the engine. If you can't get them to you, you're stuck in park.

How to get traffic to a website is a topic about which huge amounts have been written, and I won't seek here to get into the sorts of things you can find out there — about search-engine optimization or otherwise. Even if you already know a bit about those things, though, you'll find they don't always hold equal weight when it comes to webcomics.

For one thing, the 'bots that search engines send out to crawl websites are looking for text, not images — so, if your site doesn't have relevant *text in addition to the webcomic*, it might mistake your site for something it isn't. In our case with *Sword & Sarcasm*, early incarnations of the site were light on text — and we could tell just from watching what was coming in on the Google Adsense ads what Google's database thought the site was about: swords! We may well have sold a katana or two for someone's patrons — hopefully, for peaceful use! — but that really wasn't the aim. So we added text to ride on every page — and salted hither and yon "webcomic" and other words related to what we were.

That's fine for the commercial search engines looking for anything — but the portals dealing specifically with webcomics are, of course, worthy of more (and more immediate) attention ...

Directories and toplists. Feeling our way around in the dark, we spent a lot of time in our initial months registering the strip on the various directories and "toplists" out there. They're all different: some subtly so, some much more dramatically.

TopWebComics.com and Buzzcomix.net have toplists where you can put a "vote" button on your site that anyone can use. TopWebComics goes a step further by allowing publishers to provide the avatars it uses to confirm votes. This means your characters and a link to the strip get put in front of people visiting and voting for other strips, as well. I've read pros and cons about these kinds of vote systems, but they're easy enough to sign up for, and no activity's really required after that. (Well, besides voting for yourself once a day, which one site I saw actively encourages.)

Some rank websites, not by votes of the general public, but by the number of their members who mark the strip as a favorite: more of a controlled sample, which, in our short experience, seems to work fairly well. Belfrycomics.net, which specializes in anthropomorphic comics, is one of these and also notes for readers similar comics to yours, by comparing what other things people have marked as favorites.

There are also sites that have engines that crawl yours looking for new strips, updating their own readers when new ones are posted. OnlineComics.net gives you a snippet of code to wrap around your comics posting — and then crawls the registered websites nightly to look for new strips. TheWebComicList.com and Piperka.net work similarly.

Sites tend to come and go — FamilyWebComics.com just went offline for retooling, whereas we've recently discovered WebcomicZ.com and WebComicsCollage.com. (The latter is a crazy-quilt of teeny, tiny graphics from hundreds of sites.)

Which sites are biggest? It's something that tends to change from month to month for a variety of reasons, but you can tell a little just by looking at vote counts. You can also download the Alexa toolbar and see the size-ranking of the site. It's also worth noting that, since all the sites and their audiences are different, every new webcomic will probably fare differently. Alexa ranks The Belfry smaller than some of the other sites mentioned above, but, because of our own funny-animal element, we get more traffic from there than several of the others combined.

From whence they came. Almost as helpful as knowing where to find readers is knowing where the ones you have are coming from.

Google Analytics, a free service, can give you the domain names of every site that sent you visitors in a given day — so, even if your website is, on its own, not set up to provide traffic information, it can. It does require a modest bit of HTML — you've got to know how to hide its code somewhere on your site's page template. It took about 10 seconds using Blogger.

It's a useful tool for helping you discover sites out there with which you can interact — and for helping you figure out the relative drawing power of the sites with which you're already dealing. We probably put the same amount of time into dealing with the different aggregator sites starting out, but soon learned which sites were better at sending us traffic (due to their own traffic, our positioning, what we had to show there, *etc.*). The mix will, again, be different for each strip, so it's something you can only find out by checking IDs at the door. Referring URL IDs, that is ...

Going grassroots. A lot of traffic from — and promotion about — webcomics comes from other webcomics. Publishing a comic book *used* to mean you needed to know someone who knew printing, who knew distribution, who knew color separations. Now, it's important to know other cartoonists — and to be seen regularly in their own communities, commenting on strips (with that handy URL signature leading back to your own strip).

Almost as helpful as knowing where to find readers is knowing where the ones you have are coming from.

With webcomics, you can have a soft, rolling launch, figuring out various things as you go.

Helping others build their communities builds your own.

Unfortunately, this turned out to be the Achilles' heel with the efforts to get *Sword & Sarcasm* rolling. At least, for my part — not just because that requires a significant investment of time, but because of the way I'd grown up reading and commenting on comics. I was not what you might call "a participant reader" starting out. In reading tens of thousands of comic books over the years, I sent letters to exactly ... *two*. To, of all things, *Team America* (OK, I was a kid) and *Captain America* — and, when the latter letter was actually printed, I declared victory and gave up. Certainly, I wrote about and reviewed comics in my own fanzines and for a time while I worked for ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** — but providing direct feedback to the creators themselves just wasn't part of my approach to reading comics. And, while I gave up reviewing comics entirely well before I began writing them professionally, that latter fact militates even more against opining about other people's stuff. I don't deny it's possible for a cartoonist (or writer or artist) to fairly evaluate someone else's work in the same line — but you slap that on the Internet in the form of direct feedback, and things get a little dicier.

I suspect it's a generational thing, to a degree. For the regular consumer of comics used to providing direct feedback, this is probably no problem at all. But, if you don't have the inclination or time for substantive participation in others' communities, you're at a disadvantage. A number of webcomics creators limit their input to "Great comic! Here, read mine!" — which, while quick and painless, verges a bit on link-spam to my eye — and the eyes of others. "Trivial comments look like spam to other viewers," writes the author of the webcomics help column Floating Lightbulb (*floatinglightbulb.blogspot.com*), "so using a [linked] signature on blogs is wise only if you are making a meaningful comment." Saying something substantive is preferable — but it's also time-consuming and it needs to be done fairly regularly to keep your signature-links in current threads.

Chuck contributes to a number of such communities and participates on a number of fellow creators' boards regularly. With three blogs and a magazine column angling me toward one-way commentary, it's taken me a while longer to get into that mindset. I do think, though, that it *does* need to be done to succeed in webcomics — even as we all commented on each others' mini-comics back in the 1980s, when we were sending them back and forth. We are all, to a degree, each other's audiences. The happy difference between then and now is that, online, we're not as likely to be each other's *only* audiences!

I think that's a good place to leave things on this topic. I don't want to get into such things as monetizing your site. While it's certainly a sensible thing to consider in any enterprise you're starting, that's a wheeled conveyance well in advance of the equine. Paid advertising for your webcomic is another topic worth exploring, though Chuck and I haven't had enough experiences with it to offer much comment. Perhaps later.

But that's one of the nice things about webcomics. With print comics, it's more of a hard launch where all the efforts, all the marketing, all the preparation and education is timed to one moment: the solicitation and release of the comic book. With webcomics, you can have a soft, rolling launch, figuring out various things as you go. Which we're doing — and, from the sound of it, so are the people who've been doing it for years, because what works online today may not work tomorrow. Good comics, though, always work!

SWORD & SARCASM
THE CHRONICLES OF HERBERT & BENEDICT
BY JOHN JACKSON MILLER & CHUCK FIALA
It's hard to be noble — when your boss is the most hated tyrant in the land!
SUNDAY, JANUARY 18, 2009
Sword & Sarcasm #85: Change Is Good
SWORD & SARCASM #53 "Caity Cornered" EPISODE 15
BY JOHN JACKSON MILLER & CHUCK FIALA
Pausing in his escape from the Belchester prison tower, Duke Benedict realized an amazing thing had happened!
HEY! I'M HUMAN AGAIN!
WELL, THAT'S A MATTER OF OPINION.
YOU CHANGED BECAUSE OF JELRON'S CURSE BINDING US TOGETHER/ WE REUNITED-- SO YOU CHANGED BACK/
SOUNDS LIKE JELRON ALL RIGHT. YOU BOYS ARE RECENT VICTIMS. I WAS ONE OF HIS EARLY WORKS OF MISCHEF/
SO... ARE YOU A HUMAN TURNED INTO A CAT OR A CAT TURNED INTO A HUMAN?
IT'S A BIT MORE COMPLICATED THAN THAT...
HEY! PEOPLE ARE STILL TRYING TO KILL ME/ SHOW EACH OTHER YOUR MEMES LATER/
Get Sword & Sarcasm STUFF!
Chapters
Chatbox
© 2008 John Jackson Miller and Chuck Fiala - www.swordandsarcasm.com

JOHN JACKSON MILLER is a comics writer and historian whose credits include *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, *Iron Man*, *Indiana Jones*, and more. Visit his comics history site at *www.comichron.com*, his fiction website at *www.faraway press.com*, and his webcomic at *www.swordandsarcasm.com*!

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Kicking off 2009 in style

Reviews for a new year

by **TONY ISABELLA**

It's 2009. Another chance to get it right. Seems like a good time for comics, comics creators, and comics readers to reach for the heavens.

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp — or what's a heaven for?

— Robert Browning

This being the first *Tony's Tips* column I'm writing in this new year, I decided to go with one of my two favorite quotations in the English language. My other favorite quotation discusses great power and responsibility. You've probably heard it.

It's 2009. Another chance to get it right. Seems like a good time for comics, comics creators, and comics readers to reach for the heavens. After all, slowly but surely, we do seem to be taking over the world.

Comic books and graphic novels have been where Hollywood comes for its "new" ideas for years, with the downsides being that comics creators almost never make out as well as the Tinseltown types, and that comics publishers sometimes seem to be little more than cheap research and development for Hollywood. But, at least, we get some cool movies out of the deal.

Most bookstores have a healthy display of comics material, even though the manga usually outnumber American comics collections by a factor of two or three to one. Hmm, this opening is turning out to be not nearly as optimistic I'd hoped.

Turning to the world of politics, President Barack Obama used to collect Spider-Man and Conan comics and seems to have a working knowledge of Superman. The "great power/great responsibility" bit is as decent a rule for governing as any, and his collecting Conan indicates Obama'll be strong on defense, on offense, and on sending evil sorcerers to their respective hells.

Across the Pacific, Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso groused that the duties of his office doesn't give him enough time for his favorite pastime: reading weekly comic books. As you can imagine, the conservative politician is fairly popular among Japanese fans.

How do you say "one of us" in Japanese?

On the flip side, Japan also has Taichi Takashita, who, last October, launched a website to collect one million signatures on a petition to the government. He wants to establish a law allowing human beings to marry cartoon characters.

"I am no longer interested in three dimensions," he posted on his site. "I'd like to become a resident of the two-dimensional world. However, that seems impossible with present-day technology. Therefore, at the least, would it be possible to legally authorize marriage with a two-dimensional character?"

We should all invest in Acme Catering today.

Of course, for your Tipster, one of the highlights of 2008 was seeing Black Lightning get a shout-out from Stephen Colbert on *The Colbert Report.* Who knows? Maybe this year, I'll get a "Tip of My Hat" or a "Wag of My Finger" from the award-winning comedian, host, and writer. I'm reaching for the stars.

More realistically, I expect comicdom will muddle through this exciting new year, publish some terrific comics and graphic novels, and, hopefully, make gains in treating comics creators more fairly and respectfully. It's my wish for 2009.

And that's the word.

The Marvel Vault (Running Press, $49.95) was my pick for the best comics-related holiday gift of 2007. I'm a little slow on the draw this time out, but my pick for the best comics-related holiday gift of 2008 is ***Marvel Chronicle*** (DK Adult, $50), the spectacular year-by-year history of Marvel by Tom DeFalco, Peter Sanderson, Tom Brevoort, and Matthew K. Manning.

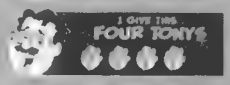
This huge (12.6 x 10.7 x 1.7 inches) hardcover book comes in a handsome slipcase and with two prints: a black-and-white print of the Jim Cheung cover and a second print of the cover as colored by Justin Posner. There's a foreword by Stan Lee and an afterword by Joe Quesada. But, neat as all those things are, the real meat of this tome is its year-by-year coverage of Marvel Comics history, including interesting, informative sidebars that place that history in the context of real-world events.

The authors did a great job exploring Marvel's characters and creators without

The Tony Scale

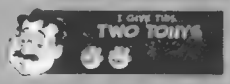
Five Tonys: Anything getting this rating is among the best comicdom has to offer.

Four Tonys: I recommend anything earning this rating.



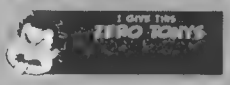
Three Tonys: This denotes something I find perfectly respectable.

Two Tonys: Basic judgment call. I found some value but not enough to recommend it.



One Tony: Buy something else.

Zero Tonys: Burn your money before buying any comic book receiving this rating.

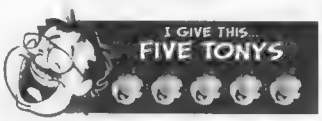


shying away from the company's occasional business reversals or the disagreements that arose between some of Marvel's most important creators. The real-world historical sidebars were just as much fun as the comics history. You could put together a pretty good film program by watching the landmark movies listed for each year.

I'm hard-pressed to find any negatives in this book. I'm sure there are some errors and omissions. (For example, in listing the editors of *FOOM*, they overlooked yours truly, the editor following Jim Steranko on the magazine.) In the real-world sidebars, I would have liked more coverage of the important books, magazines, and TV programs of those years. But these are all minor quibbles. This is a magnificent effort and would make a wonderful gift for that special comics fan in your life.

Marvel Chronicle earns the full five out of five Tonys.

www.dk.com



Sorting through books recently, I came across 2007's ***The Art of Bryan Talbot*** (NBM Publishing, $19.95). Talbot is the immensely talented creator of such legendary graphic novels as *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright, A Tale of One Bad Rat,* and *Alice in Sunderland.*

While I'm a story guy first and foremost, I enthusiastically agree that Talbot's art is worthy of a showcase like this one.

With dimensions of 11.8 x 8.9 inches, this 100-page softcover book is large enough to do justice to the art. Following an intro by Neil Gaiman, Talbot takes us on a tour of his artistic life and career that allows us to view his progress along the way. Within a few dozen pages, we get illustrations that are simply stunning in their detail and power. Overall, it's a nice mix of what you would expect from a book like this and some glorious surprises. You

get a lot of neat stuff for your 20 bucks.

The Art of Bryan Talbot earns four Tonys.

www.nbmpublishing.com

I consider *Black Jack* Vol. 3 and its previous volumes to be must reading for comics aficionados.

Osamu Tezuka's renegade surgeon returns in ***Black Jack* Vol. 3** (Vertical, $16.95). I'm not quite ready to call this series, as some have done, the best work of the creator of *Astro Boy*, *MW*, *Ode to Kirihito*, and *Phoenix*, but the brilliant but unlicensed doctor is my favorite Tezuka character. Ostensibly a mercenary who cares only for his enormous fees, Black Jack often emerges as a force of justice, a savior, and, sometimes, a proud man forced to face the limitations of even his own remarkable skills.

There are 15 stories in this volume and, as is the norm for the series, some could be categorized as fantasy, horror, and science fiction. Though Tezuka had a medical degree and calls on that knowledge in his work, he's willing to stretch reality for a story and there are some great ones here.

In one tale, a strange malady is causing animals and people to shrink until their bodies can no longer support them. In another, Black Jack is forced to operate on himself under the most extreme conditions. Tezuka takes his protagonist all around the world in search of his high fees and, perhaps, redemption.

The supporting characters are as fascinating as Black Jack. He lives with Pinoko, an 18-year-old woman in the artificial body of a child who loves him despite the impossibility of that love. He crosses scalpels with Doctor Kiriko, a doctor who charges large fees to end the lives of his patients.

YES!
MAYBE THEY KNOW BY INSTINCT THAT THEY CAN DEVELOP IMMUNITIES WITH THE HELP OF TOXINS... FROM TISSUE THAT SUCCUMBED TO...
I GOT IT!!

In a story based on real-life events in the 1970s, Black Jack treats a baby abandoned in a coin locker. A bullying classmate of Pinoko's steals a purse and, using the key in the purse, finds the baby. Showing unexpected compassion, the teenager brings the baby to Black Jack. In a book filled with great stories, this character study is one of the best.

I consider *Black Jack* Vol. 3 and its previous volumes to be must reading for comics aficionados. Tezuka's skill is rightfully legendary; he flawlessly combines action, drama, and even humor in compelling human stories.

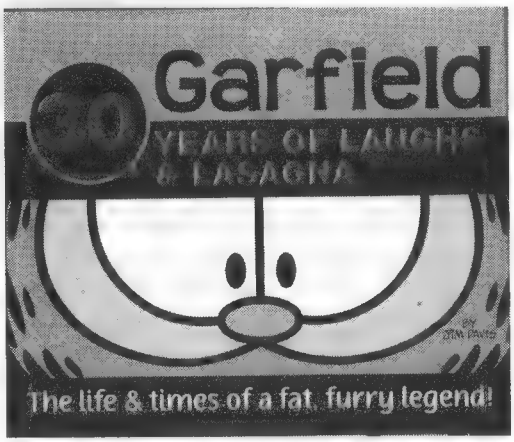
Black Jack Vol. 3 earns the full five Tonys.

www.vertical-inc.com

I love Garfield. Completely and unapologetically, I love that chunky cat and his comic strip. It was our own Maggie Thompson who introduced me to Garfield, proclaiming *Garfield at Large: His First Book* as "how comic strips should be reprinted." That was in 1980.

Having never read the strip prior to that, which amazes me to this day, I bought the book and then I kept buying the books and, one of these days, when I get them out of storage and figure out which of the 45-and-counting Garfield books I don't already own, I plan on completing my collection. I love Garfield.

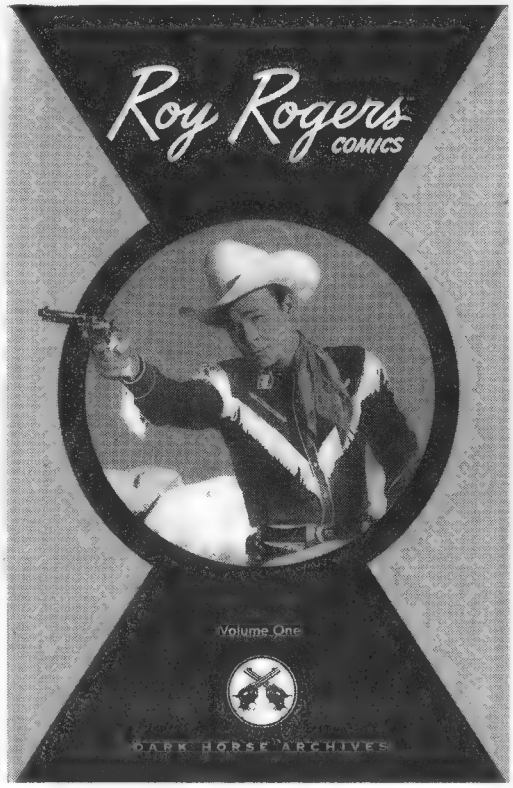
That love extends to ***Garfield: 30 Years of Laughs & Lasagna: The Life & Times of a Fat, Furry Legend!*** (Ballantine Books, $35). This handsome, 288-page hardcover book features a decade-by-decade history of Garfield, his creator Jim Davis, and the many wondrous things that come with the cat. Besides reprinting more than 400 strips, Davis offers fun insights on his characters, his creative process, and more. For the big finish, we get the cartoonist's 30 favorite Garfield strips. I love this book.



Garfield: 30 Years of Laughs & Lasagna: The Life & Times of a Fat, Furry Legend! earns the full five Tonys.

www.ballantinebooks.com

Packing an Amazon gift card, I got ***Roy Rogers* Vol. 1** (Dark Horse, $49.95) for myself. Like every kid of my generation, I had watched the King of the Cowboys on TV, both in reruns of his films and on his TV series. I don't have strong memories of them — after all, Roy was competing with Superman for my attention — save that they were maybe too wholesome to be interesting. I had absolutely no memory of reading *Roy Rogers* comic books as a kid; I bought this book to address that shocking gap in my comics knowledge.



This volume reprints the first five Roy Rogers comics, which were published by Dell in 1944 through 1946. From *Four Color* #38, "Blazing Guns" is a 49-page thriller by the prolific Gaylord DuBois and artist Burris Jenkins. This story and the others in the book are more violent than I would normally associate with either DuBois or Rogers, but that's an observation and not a criticism.

DuBois didn't go in for gratuitous violence. Those who die by the gun or other means are either innocent victims, whose deaths carry emotional and story weight, or villains who deserve the fates they bring upon themselves.

The stories are intricately plotted and developed, so much so that I at first thought they might be adaptations of movies. But, no, given the expanded page counts of these adventures, DuBois did some of the most exciting Western comics I've ever read.

The Jenkins art is a little rough visually, but his sense of storytelling and his ability to depict action made him an instant favorite of mine. Albert Micale took over the art with the second issue and, while his work is certainly competent, he doesn't bring the energy that Jenkins brought to that first issue.

These 200-plus pages of *Roy Rogers* comic books leave me eager for more of the same. Kudos to Dark Horse for bringing us another great collection of vintage comics.

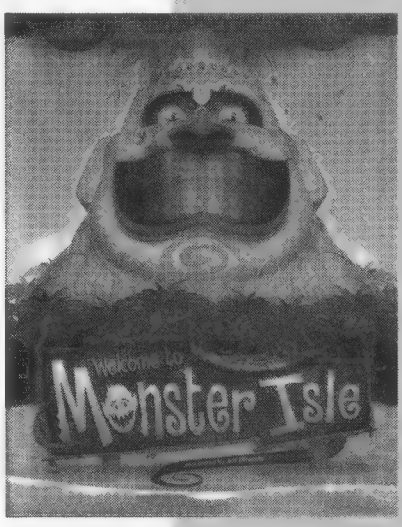
Roy Rogers Vol. 1 earns the full five Tonys.

www.darkhorse.com

Welcome to Monster Isle by Oliver Chin with illustrations by Jeff Miracola (Immedium, $15.95) is a children's book I would have loved to read to my own kids. Of course, what with Eddie now being 20 and Kelly being 17, that isn't likely to happen.

When the vacationing Summers family goes on a boat ride with the Skipper and his first mate Tina, a storm damages their ship and deposits them on an island inhabited by familiar giant creatures from the big-footed Yowie to the fire-breathing Zillard. The book puts its human heroes in a bit more peril than is the norm for such books, but never in a truly scary manner. The kids will love these monsters, and adults reading this book to those kids will appreciate the homages, the lively plot, and the fun art.

Welcome to Monster Isle



These 200-plus pages of *Roy Rogers* comic books leave me eager for more of the same.

The kids will love these monsters, and adults reading this book to those kids will appreciate the homages, the lively plot, and the fun art.

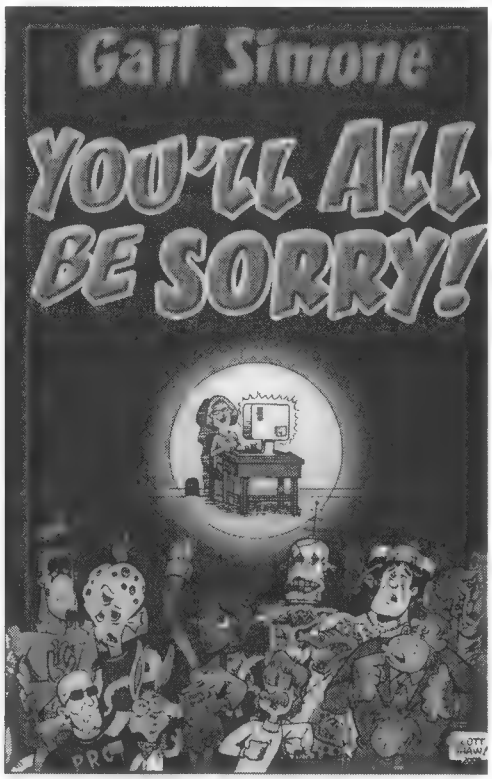
earns four Tonys. It'd be a terrific gift for any creature-loving kids in your life.

www.immeedium.com

Before Gail Simone was the acclaimed writer of *Birds of Prey, Secret Six*, and *Wonder Woman*, she was sharpening her claws and her skills as the writer of ***You'll All Be Sorry*** (About Comics, $11.99), weekly online parody and satire columns that, more often that not, left their readers doubled up with laughter. As one back-issue blurber wrote, "Gail stole my heart with a clever joke, dashed it to pieces with a biting satire, and ruined me for other columnists."

Oh, wait, that was your Tipster who wrote that. The praises of Gail have also been sung by relative unknowns Warren Ellis and Marv Wolfman, to name but two. My affection for her is, of course, pure. Those other guys are just creepy.

This 160-page book collects more than two dozen *YABS* columns, lovingly skewering comic books, fan fiction, Scott McCloud, The Punisher, Galactus, Batman movies, and much more. At the risk of revealing an ego the size of a planet, one of my favorite pieces is "Tony's Hourly Online Tips," a "gentle" spoof of my



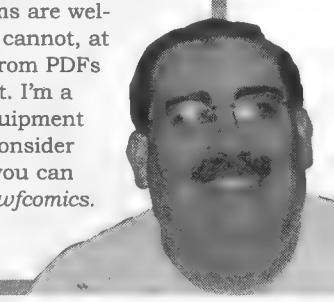
long-running daily column. It's the pretty ones who hurt you.

To cleanse the parody pallet between Simone's columns, she has included "Classic Condensed Comics Classics," mini-spoofs written for this book by a legion of comics writers. Among their glorious ranks: Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Mark Verheiden, Colleen Doran, Peter David, Kurt Busiek, and others.

Providing readers hours of poignant lessons about life — along with a very cool cover by Scott Shaw! — *You'll All Be Sorry* earns four out of five Tonys.

www.aboutcomics.com

TONY ISABELLA, comics writer and author, has been appearing in ***CBG*** since #3 in 1971. Review items can be sent to 840 Damon Drive, Medina, OH 44258. Advance copies of comics and other items are welcome, but, regretfully, I cannot, at this time, review them from PDFs or websites. It's my fault. I'm a dinosaur working on equipment Fred Flintstone would consider primitive. You're lucky you can still e-mail me at *tony@wfcomics.com*.



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"--WHEN THE DOOR OPENS, TO ADMIT--
"--MY MURDERER...!"
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❑ #26 and up EA	$2.50	❑ #16-25 EA	$3.00
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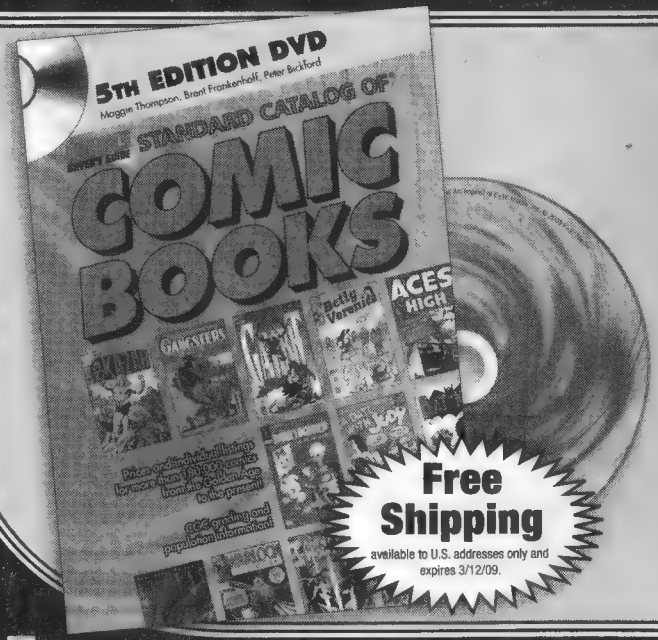

by Maggie Thompson, Brent Frankenhoff, Peter Bickford

Some things are worth the wait, including the fifth edition of *Comics Buyer's Guide Standard Catalog of Comic Books* – now on DVD! This sleek and slimmed down version of the original mammoth-size reference contains all the details, pricing and comic book covers (now in COLOR) that you would expect from the super-sized book, in an easy-to-use DVD-ROM for your PC or Mac.

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REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH COMIC BOOK

Jingle Belle: Santa Claus vs. Frankenstein #1

Image

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.

Writer: Paul Dini; Artist: Stephanie Gladden

reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★★★

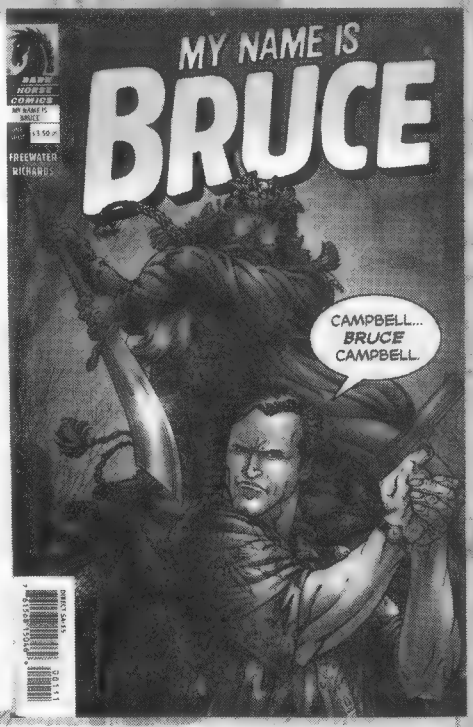
As Thelma Peake begins her campaign against Santa Claus for being politically incorrect, she urges cities to ban his upcoming visits. While extreme snowboarding, Santa's daughter Jingle Belle discovers Frankenstein's Monster frozen in a block of ice. They bond over their daddy issues, and she gets her old man to put him on at the toyshop. Frankie soon adapts to his new life but, when he learns about Peake, rushes to defend his benefactor, and Santa must stop him before it's too late.

Any appearance by Jingle Belle comes as a pleasant surprise but her screwing up and slacking off are a lot easier to take when she shows off her big heart and good intentions, as she does here. Dini's portrayal of The Monster comes straight from the novel, and putting him to work on the toy assembly line, side by side with elves from mythologies around the world, is pure genius. If only the fist fight between Santa and Frankenstein had gone longer.

www.imagecomics.com

My Name Is Bruce
Dark Horse

$3.50, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Milton Freewater, Jr.; Artist: Cliff Richards
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★



It's not easy to compress a feature film, even one as genre-driven and formulaic as *My Name Is Bruce*, into a 32-page comic book. While this one-shot is entertaining and well-drawn, it suffers from the pacing problems and story gaps that ensue when too much is stuffed into too little.

Simple plot: when he's sent to a small town to help battle the sort of monsters he usually faces in his B-movies, Bruce Campbell assumes it's a practical joke. Of course it isn't, and, after lots of posturing, wry asides, and retreats, Campbell comes through with the help of the fan who sought his help in the first place.

Since this involves Campbell, there's quite a bit of silliness. (The murderous ghost who protects long-dead Chinese miners is the defender of bean curd.) There's also a fair number of bad puns and questions about why an obscure actor is left to fight a menace that has murdered several people. That, plus the inexplicable presence of the ghost, the annoying chorus of two dead Chinese miners, and the lack of characterization of everyone except Campbell — by default — makes the experience of reading this comic as unsatisfying as eating bean curd.

www.darkhorse.com

Guardians of the Galaxy #7
Marvel

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writers: Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning; Artist: Paul Pelletier
reviewed by **Andrew Wahl** ★★★½

Whether you're a fan of Bronze Age or current comics, there's something to like about the current incarnation of *Guardians of Galaxy*. Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning strike a nice balance here, mixing old and new, action and humor. In just a handful of issues, they've put together a great mix of characters and put them through their paces. (Rocket Raccoon is an early favorite. No, really.) Strong characterization, smart dialogue, and cliffhanger endings help make this one of the best titles in Marvel's current line.

Guardians is made even stronger by career-best work from penciller Paul Pelletier. His style, also an amalgam of old and new, is the perfect fit. There's a refreshing "comic-bookishness" to his art that makes this book stand out. This issue features a flashback to the classic, Bronze Age Guardians team, and they've never looked better. (Credit should also go to Pelletier's artistic supporting cast: inkers Rick Magyar and Wil Quintana.)

The entire creative team has been tapped for Marvel's next cosmic epic, *War of Kings*. Hopefully, they won't be leaving the Guardians behind.

www.marvel.com

Justice Society of America Annual #1
DC

$3.99, color, 48 pgs.
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artists: Jerry Ordway, Bob Wiacek
reviewed by **George Nelson** ★★★

Like this story's lead character, Power Girl, readers looking forward to a return to Earth-2 got more than they expected in this tale. It has more to do with Helena Wayne (daughter of the Earth-2 Batman, also known as The Huntress) than with Power Girl.

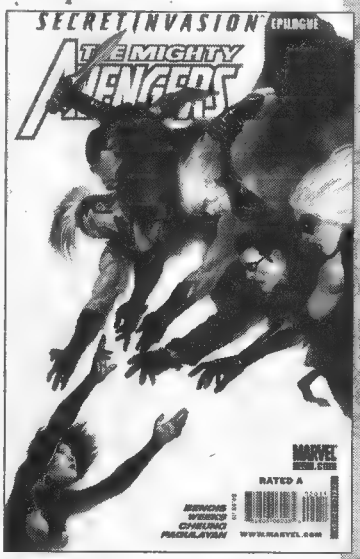
Writer Geoff Johns and DC wisely chose to set this tale in the annual format, giving Johns and penciller Jerry Ordway (whose return to these characters — including several no longer in active continuity — is welcome) room to explore this incarnation of The Justice Society and Earth-2. Particularly noteworthy is the interplay between Power Girl and Huntress, whose personal world is under assault and who is harboring a secret of her own.

This story would be little more than an exercise in nostalgia in less talented hands, but Johns' careful blending of the established with new twists of his own (particularly in the issue's climax) set it above that.

Regular JSA artists Dale Eaglesham and Wade von Grawbadger cap the issue with an amusing portrait session featuring the modern JSA.

www.dccomics.com

Mighty Avengers #20
Marvel
$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Brian Michael Bendis; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Andrew Wahl** ★½



Mighty this issue is not. When this second *Avengers* title was launched, writer Brian Michael Bendis said it would be the place for fans to go for "the bigger kind of stories," promising "a rip-roaring, fun comic book." Man, that seems like a long time — and a long Skrull invasion — ago.

For the last several months, the adventures of the Mighty Avengers have been kicked to the curb in order to tell supplemental tales of Bendis' *Secret Invasion*. Some of the stories were decent, but most were like this one: a few nice character moments stretched out to fill an entire issue.

Mighty Avengers #20 focuses on the return of Hank Pym. It's a story that deserves to be told but one that's not done justice here. There isn't much in the way of substance, with recent events being "retold" via pinups. And why did it take three pencillers to deliver an issue so scant on content?

At the end of the day, this isn't an awful comic book. But it sure doesn't deliver much value for the entertainment dollar.

www.marvel.com

Mr. X: Condemned #1
Dark Horse
$3.50, color, 24 pgs.
Writer and artist: Dean Motter
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★★

As if Radiant City (now better known as Somnopolis, because its altered architectural designs have caused its citizens to suffer from lack of sleep and mass psychological breakdowns) didn't have enough problems, urban decay has set in. Giant robot wrecking crews have been let loose to tear down whole sections. Meanwhile, a serial killer is at work, sending taunting letters to newspapers, and, once more, the only one who might be able to save the city is the mysterious Mr. X.

Mr. X holds an important place in the history of independent comics, and, while old-school fans will appreciate the subtle nods to Dean Motter's other super-science cities (Electropolis, Terminal City, *etc.*), new readers needn't worry. They don't need to know anything about Radiant City's (frankly complicated) history, because this issue serves as a solid introduction to the character and his milieu, allowing the reader to explore his wondrous retro-future world and be swept away in a story that's equal parts mystery and adventure.

www.darkhorse.com

Hellblazer Presents: Chas — The Knowledge #1-3
DC/Vertigo
$2.99 @, color, 32 pgs. @
Writer: Simon Oliver; Artist: Goran Sudzuka
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½

Point: A mini-series for John Constantine's longtime mate (that's Brit vernacular, folks), Chas, is well deserved and a dream come true for many *Hellblazer* fans. Counterpoint: A spin-off mini-series should provide a reason for not being part of the series from which it spun out. *The Knowledge* has lots of the former going for it, but not so much the latter.

Granted, Simon Oliver has made a point of keeping Constantine's involvement to a minimum — although he is part of this entertaining story. Thus far, Chas has had to handle things by himself, and it looks as if that's the way the rest of this series will go, too. However, that does not justify giving the character his own series.

This is a creative team certainly worthy of doing a Chas mini-series, and Goran Sudzuka's art makes turning pages all the easier, but the story itself — although enjoyable and certainly worth a chapter in the *Hellblazer*-verse — isn't quite up to snuff in terms of justifying *The Knowledge* as a spin-off.

www.dccomics.com

Thor: The Truth of History #1
Marvel

$3.99, color, 48 pgs.
Writer: Alan Davis; Artists: Davis, Mark Farmer
reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★

Framed by a modern-day sequence in which a pair of Egyptologists discuss the archaeological mysteries (such as a Pharaoh's head sitting atop a lion's body) surrounding the Great Sphinx on the Giza plateau, this tale of the classic version of Thor takes place nearly 4,000 years in the past.

The Truth of History opens with Thor, the lady Sif, and The Warriors Three in battle with the Witch Queen Nedra. Nedra has opened her own mystical portal into Midgard (our world), through which one of the Warriors Three immediately stumbles.

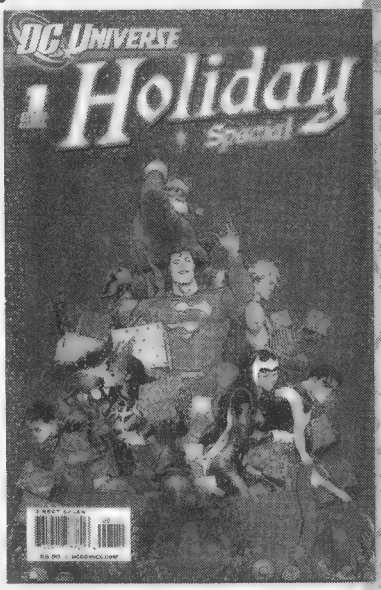
The God of Thunder's subsequent rescue mission to ancient Egypt leads to a battle with a mad king and the original inspiration for the Great Sphinx: a gigantic, fire-breathing Griffin. But this leftover pet from the gods of Heliopolis isn't the only sphinx mystery that will be resolved.

The creative team of Alan Davis and Mark Farmer have always produced comics with a solid narrative flow and crisp images, and this is no exception. Rob Schwager complements the art with excellent color work.

www.marvel.com

DC Universe Holiday Special #1
DC

$5.99, color, 80 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Martin Gray** ★★★



Behind a heartwarming Frank Quitely cover, DC's grab-bag of holiday shorts is a mixed Santa sack, with quality ranging from superb to lamentable.

The best of the bunch is "A Day without Sirens" by Joe Kelly and Mick Bertilorenzi, as peace descends on Gotham. "The Man in Red" (a tale for Superman fans by writers Matt Cherniss and Peter Johnson and artists Ivan Reis and Joe Prado) uses its secret-origin twist to provide a tasty Fortress birth scene.

Ian Churchill provides stunning art for Dan DiDio's story of the Silver Age Aquaman. A JLA Christmas bash (courtesy of Alan Burnett and Kevin Maguire) is joyful stuff, while Paul Dini and Dustin Nguyen supply a gorgeous spin on Good King Wenceslas. And Adam Schlagman and Rodolfo Migliari explain why Doctor Light II sticks with such a sullied image.

The rest is OK, though often too preachy, but as a package this is a nice offering from DC.

www.dccomics.com

Spawn #185-186
Image

$2.95 @, color, 28 pgs. @
Writers: Todd McFarlane, Brian Holguin
Artists: Whilce Portacio, McFarlane
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

As a reader of *Spawn* since #1, I was surprised — and am still a bit hesitant to believe — the events of #185, though they are a welcome, if unnecessary, change to the status quo of this series. Is Al Simmons gone? If so: wow. If not: Let's see where this goes from here, then.

This issue also sees the return of Spawn creator Todd McFarlane to the front lines. He shares writing and art duties now, something not seen for — well, the last few years, anyway. Since he's the one who made *Spawn* such an intriguing and captivating title — something that has fluctuated in the years since — it's exciting to see McFarlane return to his creation. Can *Sam and Twitch* be far behind?

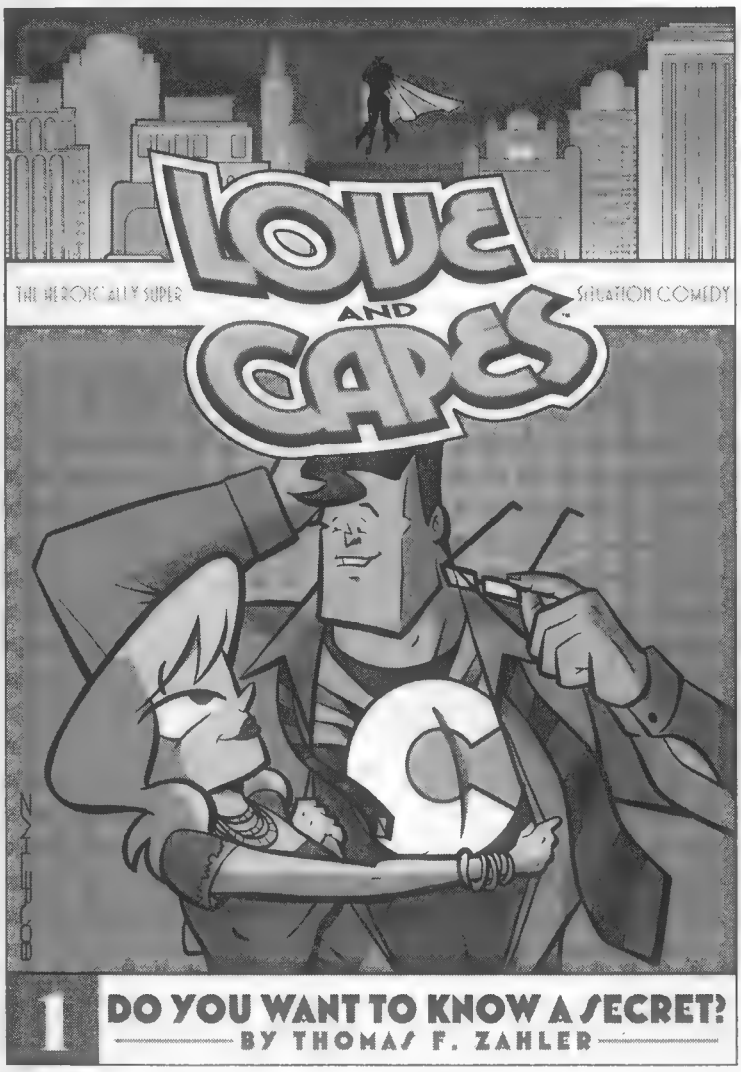
As for the addition of artist Whilce Portacio? Excellent, excellent choice. The new direction seems eager to move away from much of what has come before. If it remains true to this ideal, then don't expect Sam, Twitch, Wanda, or Cyan to be around as much — or at all. And perhaps Spawn 2.0 is what the series needs.

www.imagecomics.com
www.spawn.com

Nothin' but love (and capes)

An interview with Thom Zahler

by **KAREN O'BRIEN**



Some of my favorite small-press and independent-publisher finds lately have come on the recommendation of others, so not long ago I posted a thread in the forums on CBGXtra.com asking readers to "Recommend an Indie." Needless to say, the response has been fantastic.

One of the first suggestions was *Love and Capes*. It's a romantic situation comedy featuring the world's most non-annoying perfect couple. Mark Spencer is a mild-mannered accountant who reveals his secret identity as The Crusader (the most powerful super-hero on the planet) to Abby Tennyson (a "normal" independent bookstore owner with a sharp wit) in the very first issue.

Their relationship is a magnificent balance of humor and genuine affection, as Abby learns how not to be "the worst super-hero's girlfriend *ever*." It's no small task. Not only does she have to face Mark's family, she has to deal with The Crusader's family, as well — his best friend Darkblade and the rest of The Liberty League. She worries with every punch The Crusader takes but holds her own, "I don't want to ever have to go through that again. So for us to stay together — you're going to have to have to stop blocking punches with your face." In the next frame, when Abby tells Mark she loves him, I believe her — and you will, too.

With eight issues available, a trade that collected #1-6 in stores now, and #9 on the way, it's safe to say that I'm jumping on the *Love and Capes* bandwagon. The series earns a four-star rating from me for providing characters worth laughing with and cheering for. The fabulous art lifts their relationship right off the pages, as Zahler's expressive cartooning style captures the action and romance with humor and humility.

Meet Thom

After being dropped on his head as a child, Thom Zahler began to draw. It didn't hurt that his father had studied art and everyone in his family had a creative side.

CBG: *How did you get started in art and comics?*

Thom Zahler: I can't remember a time when I didn't want to work in comics. I've just always known. It was kind of like that

"destined to become a Jedi" thing, without the lame Midichlorians.

In grade school and high school, I did all the art stuff I could. It's going to sound implausible, but even then I wanted to give myself deadlines and things that forced me to create. I knew that's what a professional artist did, so I wanted to train myself to create art on demand.

I was very much afraid to go to a traditional college. I didn't want to learn a career to fall back on, because I might fall back. I went to the Kubert School (the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art). I'd been reading about it for years in the back of comics and in *Dynamite* magazine. I thought it offered the best training and best chance to be a cartoonist.

When I graduated, I worked at an amusement park that first summer, doing caricatures. I *never* thought I'd do caricatures, but I learned the skill and it came in handy. I went on to be a graphic artist at a newspaper and then, years later, an art director for a small advertising agency.

Meanwhile, I'd been building up a decent freelance career. By 2001, I was just about ready to quit my ad agency job. So I built up a savings account and prepared to go. I don't mean to lessen the event in *any* way, but, when Sept. 11 happened, I just decided the time to wait was over. By November, I was on my own.

It's been more than seven years of full freelance, and I have never looked back.

CBG: *What were (and are) your creative influences?*

Zahler: Growing up, Curt Swan and Kurt Schaffenberger were probably the biggest influences. That's because I was a Superman fan, and they were working on the books at the time. They weren't necessarily splashy, but they were always solid and fantastic storytellers.

As a writer, I grew up on Gerry Conway on *JLA* and my favorite, *Firestorm*; Roy Thomas on *All-Star Squadron* and *Infinity, Inc.*; and Chris Claremont on the X-franchise. As far as writing, Mark Waid's a big one. His *Flash* run was the kind of comic I always wanted to write. It was fun (which, sadly has become a pejorative these days) and had all the things that I think should be part of the best super-hero books.

Berke Breathed's *Bloom County* was a big one, too. His storytelling and pacing were just great, as well as really fun characters. I go between that, *Peanuts*, and *Calvin and Hobbes* when I'm looking for inspiration.

Plus, I think you shouldn't look to your medium as your only source, lest you become stale. I think Aaron Sorkin is the Stan Lee of TV. He doesn't write the way people talk, he writes the way people *wish* they talked. Paul Reiser's *Mad about You* is the patron saint of *Love and Capes*. I love dialogue, especially cadence, and these guys just nail it.

CBG: *What led you to create these characters and this title?*

Zahler: A couple things came together. One was that I had just finished up the third *Raider* graphic novel. In it, Agent Vega — Catwoman to Raider's Batman — and The Raider were thrown together. And it was just so much fun to write their banter. Then in 2004, the Bravo network did a *Project Greenlight*-type of show called *Situation: Comedy* for sitcoms. I wrote a script for them, *Long Distance*. I found that I really liked that sitcom-type format and wanted to do a new comics project that was something along those lines.

One of the ideas that came about as I was working on that sitcom was a super-hero sitcom. It came about too late to do it for *Situation: Comedy*, but that was OK, since I decided to do it as a comic. It was just that chocolate-and-peanut-butter moment: romantic comedy *and* super-heroes? Why, that'd work great together. Heck, the romance was the best part of the *Adventures of Lois and Clark* TV show.

I'd always loved Superman, so a Superman-type was a natural choice. With Abby, it was important that she be funny and interesting enough to stand on her own and not be just "the girlfriend."

CBG: *What has been your favorite scene between Mark and Abby to draw? To write?*

Zahler: In the first six issues, there are two that stand out. There's a bit in the second issue where Abby gets in a snowball fight with Mark. Mark winds up super-speeding away and flying behind her with a giant snowball. Abby doesn't even turn around and says, "Don't even think it." It's a great real moment, the staging is pretty nice, and Abby's expression is great.

CHRONOPOLIS--
So things are going well with Abby?
A couple bumps. Nothing major.
You should bring her to the next Liberty League meeting. She might get a thrill out of meeting them.
I know they'd like to meet her.
I don't want to overwhelm her with too much of this nerd stuff too quickly.
Meeting the seven most powerful beings on the planet might be a little bit of sensory overload.
You haven't told her you dated Amazonia yet, have you?
Heck, no!
Things look quiet here. You want to go check out the North Side?
Nah. I think you can handle things
I'm going to head back home.
Evil afoot in Deco City?
No. I just promised Abby that, if I could, I'd try to watch "Gilmore Girls" with her tonight.
See you at the Liberty Lair.
"Gilmore Girls?"
Somebody's whipped.
And somebody still has super-hearing, y'dope!

... it's so much easier to take a print comic and make it a webcomic... —Thom Zahler

The other is in the fifth issue where Mark has just seen his parents off at the airport. He goes to the bookstore, and Abby asks how it went. He admits that he flew behind the plane until it got to the Ohio border. When Abby says that planes are perfectly safe, Mark says, "You wouldn't say that if you'd caught as many as I have." And Mark holds up his hand as if tracing the path of a plane.

I love that bit because it's very real, but it plays to the format so well, too. It's a super-hero joke coming about from a worried son's point of view.

CBG: *Let's talk webcomics for a minute. What challenges accompany publishing for the Web? What is the technical story behind how you create and post* ***Love and Capes****?*

Zahler: *Love and Capes* was always designed to function as a print comic first. They're what I know best. Plus, it's so much easier to take a print comic and make it a webcomic, rather than doing it the other way. I did the first issue as a test, with a complete story, ready to walk away from it if I needed to. Fortunately, I didn't need to, since the reaction was so great that I couldn't stop.

I had a conversation with Bill Williams at Lone Star Press, when he was going to do a webcomic and before I started *Love and Capes*. He was the first person I knew who had the epiphany that monitors are essentially half a comics page. So, if you build a comic that could be cut in half at the equator and then stitched back together for print, it'd work both in print and on the Web.

That also helped with one of the criticisms of that initial *Long Distance* project — there needed to be more jokes. My love of Sorkin caused me to write a *SportsNight* type story that was more dramedy than comedy. I was told that there should be at least one joke per page in a script. By going to the four-panel format, I was forced to have a joke, or some other beat, every four panels.

Initially, I conceived of *Love and Capes* as a series of four-panel strips, cobbled together into a book that was as much collection as story. It wound up working much better than that, with a very clear story stitching everything together. My thought was that, if the print book didn't do well enough to warrant a second, I could always continue it as a Web strip without changing the book.

My process, such as it is, is to work everything out on tracing paper. I've got a sheet of Bristol with an eight-panel grid inked in that I throw underneath it, and I start drawing. After nine-and-a-half-issues, that grid is pretty beat up, dirty, creased, and with a coffee stain or two. But I can't give it up. It's like a good luck charm.

When I get the drawings tight enough, I tape it to the back of a sheet of marker paper and ink in brush and Micron pen through a lightbox. I'll try to design a reusable background, if I can, too. I drew Abby's bookstore back in issue #1, and I've been using huge chunks of it ever since. It's a learning process. I recently redesigned the exterior so it was more useful. I can now change the weather, add Christmas lights, things like that. In that respect, it's like an animated film: painted backgrounds with characters on top of it.

I scan everything in and composite each panel in Photoshop. I've got a library of backgrounds now, so that helps. Each panel is built "loose," so I can move it, shrink it, whatever. I take it into Illustrator, where I place each panel and crop it to the grid. Then I letter and write it, sometimes in that order. I always know what the characters will be doing and saying, but sometimes I tweak as I go.

CBG: *What creative lessons did you learn from the early chapters that you're employing as you move forward?*

Zahler: I learned a lifetime from that first chapter and issue. Let me just name a few.

A. Don't fight the flow. Amazonia was never supposed to be a big character. She was just a one-off joke. I hadn't worked though everything she'd be or how huge a part she'd be in #6. But reaction to her was so huge, I had to include her in the book after that. She's hard to write, since everything she says has to work on two levels. Can it be read honestly or snarky? It has to be both.

B. Overthink the process. It's better, and more time efficient, to think about every possible use for a background before I draw it. The more I think of every possible use, the more flexible it becomes and the easier it is to reuse it.

C. Wait for the right moment. The Atlantis joke about Mark bringing Abby a wetsuit instead of a dress for a party was supposed to be in #1. It was the second joke I wrote. But I held that in my back pocket until #3, and there it had room to breathe and grow and become a great sequence.

CBG: *How do you spread the word about* ***Love and Capes****?*

Zahler: My marketing plan is *everything.* I created a *Love and Capes* website (*www.loveandcapes.com*) that was exclusive to the book, rather than try to push it through my main site (*www.thomz.com*); I thought it needed a clearer voice. I also put the first issue up for free on the site. I've got a blog that feeds into that and I try to make my process as transparent as possible.

There's no reason not to be as many places as you can be. I'm on MySpace and working on my Facebook page. I've been on Twitter for a few months now, and I like that far more than I'd thought.

Free Comic Book Day is huge. It is the best exposure for the book I get. I move 20 times as many copies of the FCBD issue as I do the regular one.

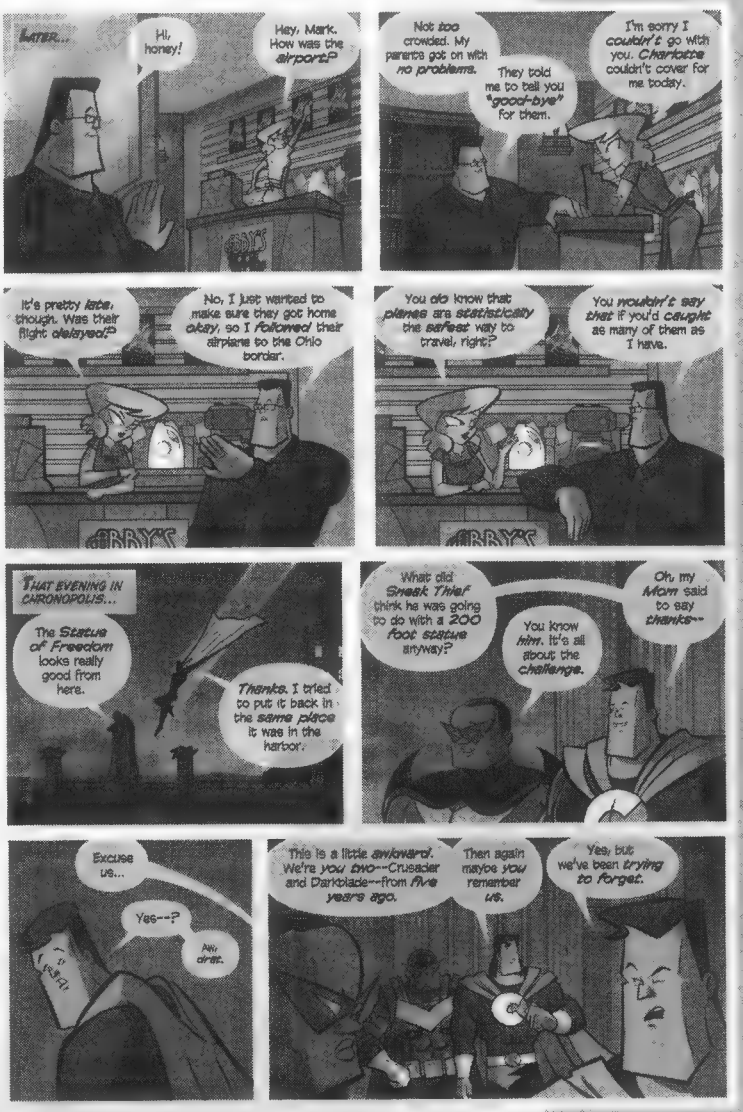
I do a bunch of conventions all across the country, as well as the FCBD event. I do seven shows a year or so, including most of the major ones. I'll be at MegaCon, New York, Charlotte, San Diego, Mid-Ohio, and Baltimore this year.

And I do interviews, obviously.

CBG: *What advice do you have for budding storytellers, writers, and illustrators who want to publish their own work?*

Zahler: First, to steal from Tom Clancy, *finish the work.* Lots of people intend to do a project, have plans to do one, but never finish — or, worse yet, never start.

Then, get yourself a group of trusted people to look at your stuff and judge it. You need someone whose judgment you trust enough to listen to when it's hard to hear.


LATER...
Hi, honey!
Hey, Mark. How was the airport?
Not too crowded. My parents got on with no problems.
They told me to tell you "good-bye" for them.
I'm sorry I couldn't go with you. Charlotte couldn't cover for me today.
It's pretty late, though. Was their flight delayed?
No, I just wanted to make sure they got home okay, so I followed their airplane to the Ohio border.
You do know that planes are statistically the safest way to travel, right?
You wouldn't say that if you'd caught as many of them as I have.
THAT EVENING IN CHRONOPOLIS...
The Statue of Freedom looks really good from here.
Thanks. I tried to put it back in the same place it was in the harbor.
What did Sneak Thief think he was going to do with a 200 foot statue anyway?
You know him. It's all about the challenge.
Oh, my Mom said to say thanks--
Excuse us...
Yes--?
Mr. Grim.
This is a little awkward. We're you two--Crusader and Darkblade--from five years ago.
Then again maybe you remember us.
Yes, but we've been trying to forget.

And you need that fresh set of eyes to look at things clearly, too.

Save your money, run the numbers, and know what you're getting into. If you want to roll with the big boys, you have to be able to act like them. I developed a marketing plan for *Love and Capes*, knew my per-unit cost, and had a reasonable expectation of what each issue would sell. I had that post-issue #2 dip, as most books have, but have been growing every issue since.

For more of this interview with Thom Zahler, check out the forums at ***www.cbgxtra.com****.*

KAREN O'BRIEN may be reached via e-mail at: *obrien500xl@gmail.com.* Send review copies to 230 Crestview Ln., Dyer, IN 46311.

Tour of the INDIES

INDEPENDENT AND SMALL PRESS

REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH INDY

Back Issue #31
TwoMorrows Publishing
$6.95, b/w, 100 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★★

Two men in comics will be remembered because of their work with ducks: Carl Barks and Steve Gerber. Not bad company.

Gerber's work encompassed more than just Howard the Duck, as this comprehensive retrospective of the late writer's *oeuvre* attests. Horror, science fiction, and super-heroes, along with humor and Saturday morning cartoons (*Thundarr the Barbarian*), were all within the scope of his talent. More than one writer remarks in these dozen-plus articles that Gerber's characters and scripts were always different and eccentric: "from left field or under the radar," as Michael Aushenker observes. Whether working with the classic heroes, using his own unorthodox creations (such as Omega the Unknown), or producing his later original series (*Nevada* and *Hard Time*), Gerber challenged readers and consistently overturned their expectations. His *Giant-Size Man-Thing* stories of adolescent angst particularly affected this reviewer.

But it all comes back to the duck and the fallout from the character and the series: the Disney lawsuit, the fight for creator rights (which formed an important part of the independent comics movement), and the failed film. Few other comics writers from Gerber's era (or any other) can claim such a legacy. Through insightful articles and a tear-inducing "Friends of Ol' Gerber Speak Out" section, this tribute helps put that legacy into perspective.

www.twomorrows.com

Cold Blooded Chillers #1
Heske Horror

$3, b/w, 40 pgs.
Writer: Robert M. Heske; Artists: Various
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★

With a title like *Cold Blooded Chillers*, along with "Tales of Suburban Murder & Malice" for a subtitle, it's easy to figure out that this comic book is not aimed at the Under-10 crowd.

What's inside is a quartet of horror stories soaked in black-and-white blood. Its stories are blunt and to the point. Happy endings are nowhere to be found, unless, as a reader, you see things with a 180° difference so that you're cheering the killers.

All of the stories are given visual life by different artists. Some of them contain art that perfectly fit independent comics — within some of the genre's lowest-end black-and-white comics from the '80s. However, the art for "False Pretenses," by Zeu, stands out as having the most potential (as defined by the interiors of mainstream comics).

Storywise, the last two tales were confusing. Then, again, as with many famously confusing horror movies, that may have been what the creators were aiming for.

www.coldbloodedchillers.com

Grimm Fairy Tales Presents Beyond Wonderland #0
Zenescope

99¢, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Raven Gregory; Artist: Daniel Leister
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

Zenescope presents its take on Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, giving it a horrific adult spin. Here, Alice's daughter Calie (an anagram of "Alice") takes center stage. Alice, upon her return from Wonderland, is mentally disturbed. Not wanting to deal with her mother, Calie becomes a substance-abusing promiscuous party-girl before she is thrust into a Wonderland far scarier than when her mom was there.

Daniel Leister does an excellent job on the art. His drawings are rich and detailed, and readers can look forward to whatever he produces in the future. Raven Gregory's take on the story is downright creepy. A bonus is a sneak peek at *1001 Arabian Nights: The Adventures of Sinbad.* This is an excellent jumping-on point for new readers. At less than $1, you can't lose.

www.zenescope.com

Malcolm Wong's Dog Eaters #1
Dabel Brothers Publishing

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Malcolm Wong; Artist: Guillermo A. Angel
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★

In a post-apocalyptic world, The Black Dog Clan struggles to survive both an unforgiving environment and The Snake Clan, their main rivals for what little remains. A "friendly" from another tribe, Bevan Chan of the White Eagles, gets in the middle of a firefight between The Black Dogs and The Snakes and is nursed back to health by Tracy, the adorable adolescent who shot him.

What passes for a plot is a second-generation anime copy of *Mad Max*, especially when it comes to the cute-as-a-button gunner Tracy who plays with her lovable pet dog when not remorselessly shooting to kill. The rest of the characters, who look as if they've escaped from a videogame, are unfortunately wafer-thin at best, and the art manages to be both glossy and grotesque.

The problem is that readers have seen (and seen) this sort of thing before and done a whole lot better — so, ultimately, the reader has to wonder just what the Dabel brothers saw in this mess.

www.dabelbrothers.com

The Indestructible Man — Unleashed! #1
Kaso Comics
$7.99, b/w, 68 pgs.
Writer: Chuck Flouds; Artist: Mel Ylagan
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★

Nothing like a good revenge tale. And a decent revenge isn't too bad, either. This debut issue has an entertaining (albeit clichéd) story about a hardcore killer who, upon capture by the law, takes revenge on everyone: his partners, his lawyer, the police, the girl he was with when the police arrested him, anyone with a pulse within shouting distance.

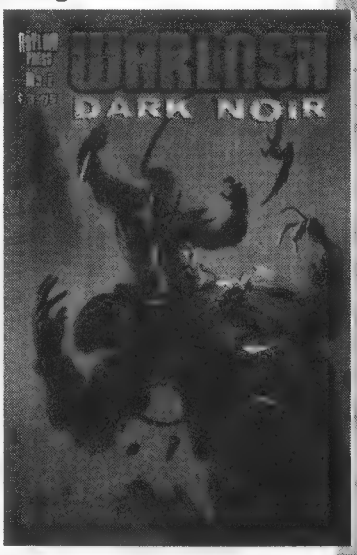
The presentation is nice: perfect-bound with a thick, glossy cover; proficient art; and (at 68 pages) it's almost large enough to justify the $8 price — if quantity is your thing. However, the cover image doesn't impress; the image on the back cover looks much better — though it, too, isn't the best choice for a cover, since it doesn't convey the "Unleashed!" message requisite for the cover.

While indie comics have their own problems — most notably budget and time constraints for the creators — there are parts of this book that didn't please that were well within the control of the creators: for example, the waitress who thinks one guy is a severe creep and tells him so, yet also gives him info on where and when to find her friend and coworker. Also, the linguistic anachronisms ("Coppers! Coppers! This palooka just killed a guy ...") seem seriously out of place.

This is a decent start, and it's to be hoped that future issues or other comics endeavors from Kaso Comics will have the rough parts smoothed out. For now, this is worth reading for those who really like revenge tales and can overlook its shortcomings.

www.kasocomics.com

Warlash: Dark Noir #1
Asylum Press
$3.95, color, 56 pgs.
Writer: Frank Forte; Artists: Forte, Steve Mannion, *et al.*
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



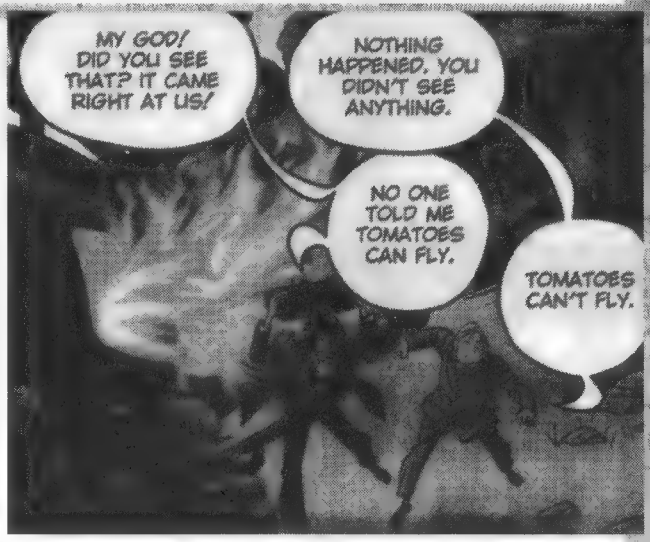
Take Eric Powell's The Goon, The Punisher, and Judge Dredd, add a dash of Anita Blake and Mickey Spillane, roll 'em into one, and you have Warlash. This armored warrior from a post-apocalyptic future battles B-horror movie-type monsters, while telling the story in a first-person perspective of hard-boiled dialogue.

The issue is divided into four stories, all written by creator Frank Forte. They're illustrated by Forte, Steve Mannion, Marcin Ponomarew, and Szymon Kudranski. Each story plays up the artist's strengths. The final one, "Grubs," drawn by Mannion, pits Warlash against a pimp with so many sexually transmitted diseases that it's turned him into a mutant. This one is in black and white — very *film noir* — and reminiscent of Marvel's black-and-white magazines of the 1970s.

The hard-boiled dialogue works. You might think it wouldn't in a supernatural setting, but Forte is one of a select few who can pull it off without seeming hokey. (Laurell K. Hamilton with the above-mentioned Anita Blake also comes to mind.) Definitely worth checking.

www.asylumpress.com

Attack of the Killer Tomatoes
Viper Comics
$3.25, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Dale Mettam; Artist: Erich Owen
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★


MY GOD! DID YOU SEE THAT? IT CAME RIGHT AT US!
NOTHING HAPPENED. YOU DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING.
NO ONE TOLD ME TOMATOES CAN FLY.
TOMATOES CAN'T FLY.

To deal with the menace of the Killer Tomatoes, America puts together an elite anti-tomato defense force called Team P.O.I.S.O.N., consisting of Sam Smith (master of disguise), Greta Attenbaum (swimming expert), Greg Colburn (underwear expert), and Wilbur Finletter (never without his sword or spent parachute).

It's hard to imagine that a lot of people will be interested in seeing a comic-book version of *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*, now only remembered, if at all, as one of the first intentional "cult movies." But those fans will undoubtedly recognize this as an adaptation of the first movie and will appreciate that, as in the movie, the audience never actually sees the tomatoes commit their atrocities. (Although this means the comic book has almost no action.)

Just as bad is the backup, a sneak peek of *Gypsy Joe Jackson* — about a former boxer turned security guard transformed into a biological weapon capable of turning those around him into maniacal killing machines. It's conventional *Resident Evil* stuff drawn in a remarkably ugly cartoony style.

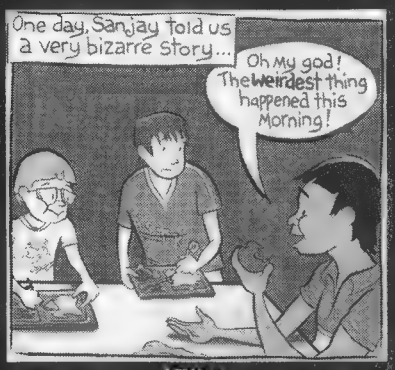
www.vipercomics.com

SELF-PUBLISHING GRANTS FROM THE xeric FOUNDATION

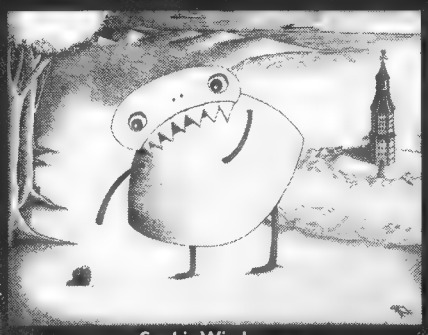
Congratulations to the November 2008 recipients!

E.C. Moorman, editor / Artist Shown: Tuesday Bassen
Ghost Comics - A Benefit Anthology for R.S. Eden
www.edsdeadbody.com

Annie Murphy
I Still Live: Biography of a Spiritualist
www.ghostcatcomics.com

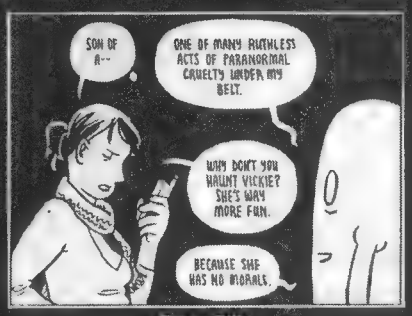


J.T.Yost
Old Man Winter and other Sordid Tales
www.jtyost.com



Sophia Wiedeman
The Deformitory
www.sophiadraws.com

Rex Brown
Love is a Peculiar Type of Thing
www.BOXBROWN.com


SON OF A--
ONE OF MANY RUTHLESS ACTS OF PARANORMAL CRUELTY UNDER MY BELT.
WHY DON'T YOU HAUNT VICKIE? SHE'S WAY MORE FUN.
BECAUSE SHE HAS NO MORALS.

Ethan Rilly
Pope Hats
erilly@gmail.com

The Xeric Foundation is proud to promote the **November 2008** grant recipients.

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Xena/Army of Darkness: What, Again? #1
Dynamite

$3.50, color, 32 pgs.

Writers: Brandon Jerwa, Elliot Serrano; Artist: Miguel Montenegro

reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★

After leaving Autolycus in charge of the ancient world's equivalent of S-Mart, Ash returns to his own time to find deadites once again overrunning his place of employment. He turns to the old wizard, now addicted to videogames on a big-screen TV, who conjures a portal that sucks Xena, Gabrielle, and Autolycus into the present.

Teaming Ash with the Xena crowd was an amusing idea, especially given the possibilities embodied by a clash of two Bruce Campbell characters. That was the charm of the initial series; whether that can be sustained yet again has yet to be seen. The first issue is mostly typical Ash-antics. As appropriate a comment as it is on our consumer culture, there's only so many times deadites can overrun S-Mart before it gets tired. Although the art is passable, more Xena and company would spice things up; throwing the trio into the present day holds promise. Here's hoping it won't degenerate into the repetition and clichés in which too many of Dynamite's *Army of Darkness* titles have ended.

www.dynamiteentertainment.com

Disney Fairies: Tinker Bell
Disney Publishing Worldwide

$3.95, color, 48 pgs.

Writer: Augusto Maccheto; Artists: Various

reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★★

The cover of this magazine, designed to tie in with the direct-to-DVD *Tinker Bell* animated movie, carries a blurb claiming it contains "cool comics" (as well as "a big bonus poster") and it certainly does, primarily a 13-page "origin" story for Tink that shows how she came to be, found her special fairy talent, and both a home and friends in Tinkers Nook.

The art, done in a slick "Italian manga" style, is as attractive as its characters are cute; the story, about Tink awkwardly trying to find her place among the fairies, will appeal to its intended audience of girls young and old. It also delivers on the cover's promise of "games, quizzes, and magical crafts," not to mention coloring pages, puzzles, and a note letting kids know that additional activity pages can be found at *www.disneyfairies.com*. Parents will get their money's worth — and then some — in this apparent one-shot, because it's everything kids' comics should be but aren't.

www.disneyfairies.com

Gearz
Bluewater Comics

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.

Writer: Dan Rafter; Artists: Thiago Silva, Jean Daniel

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

ALL HUMANS -- EXCEPT -- WOW! THEY COULD FLY!
And there was no guarantee that one wouldn't force me I mean, they'd just tried to make me to choose, right? But

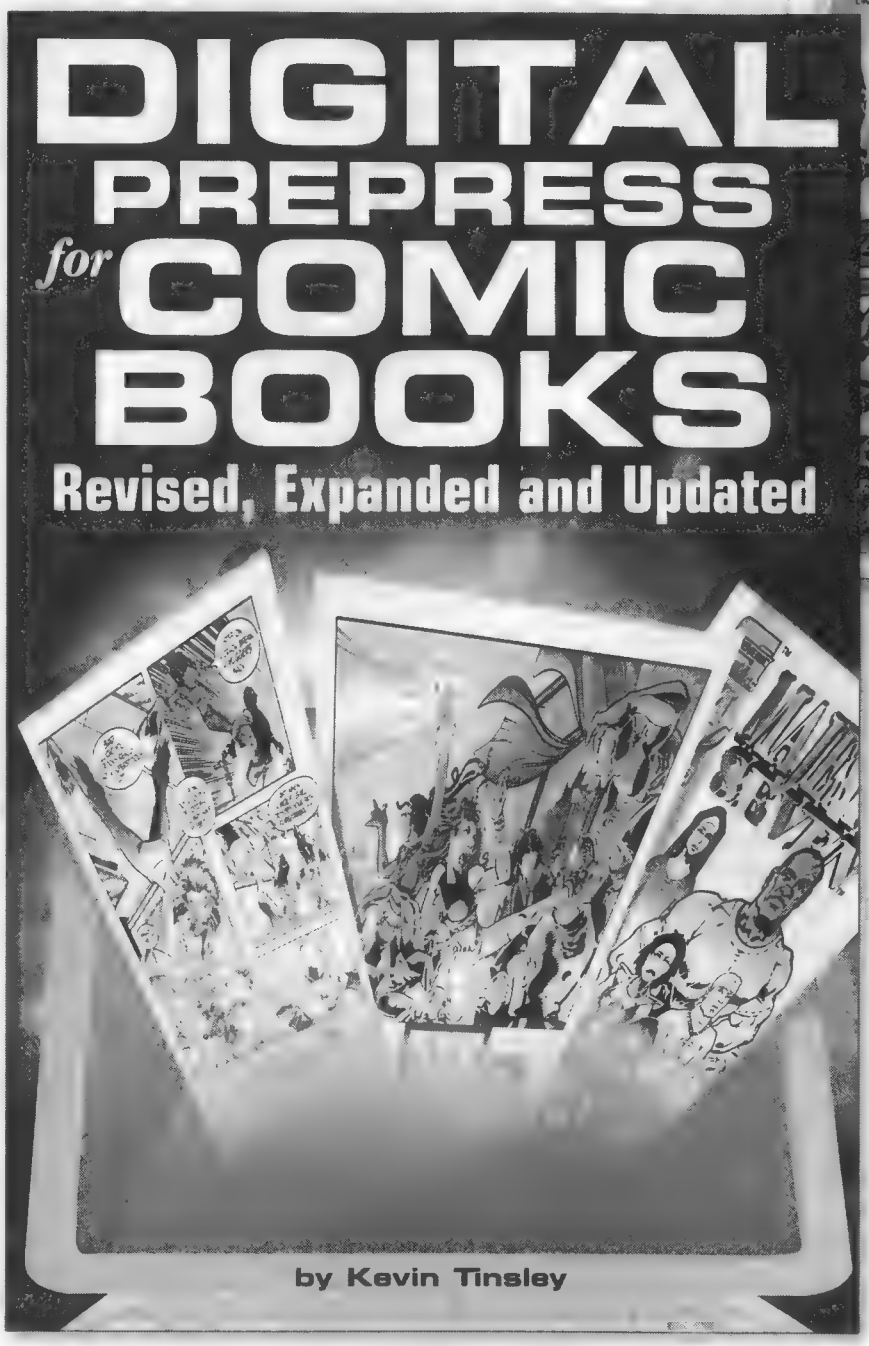
Gearz is the best title from the fledgling Bluewater Comics. Dan Rafter has written a story that's engaging and funny. The dialogue gets a bit repetitive, the story drags a little, and once or twice the reader could get lost if he or she isn't paying close attention, but the book comes together nicely, so those shortcomings are forgivable.

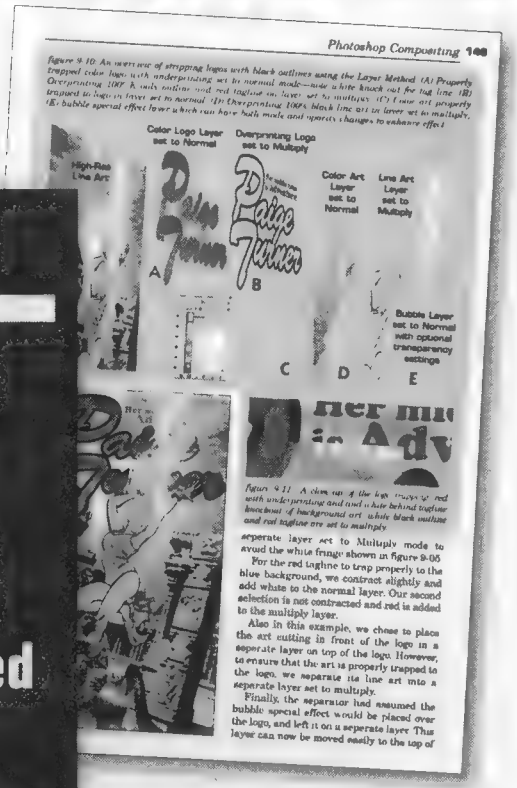
The satire of high-school life and the anguish of being the outcast work well and are not — as is often the case — overdone. There's not much subtlety, but the story does well with its many and varied elements. The protagonist — an intelligent but naïve, unpopular high-school girl named Karen — unwittingly is caught up in a mix-up of U.S. governmental proportions. But she's cool with it, and her new buds — a trio of robots — come with the instant loyalty software option. And off we go ...

The art superbly complements the book's action and overall tone, so it's to be hoped that this is a writer-artist team that stays together — the success of the book may depend on it. That's getting ahead of matters, however, since this is the first issue. For now, *Gearz* is one to check out.

www.bluewaterprod.com

REVISED, EXPANDED & UPDATED





The original edition of *Digital Prepress for Comic Books* became the ultimate reference used by professionals throughout the industry. This updated edition covers:

- current software upgrades
- new sections on InDesign
- new chapter on creating PDFs

With over 200 pages of detailed instructions and 300 color illustrations, this manual will provide the answers and solutions you will need to successfully print a magazine or graphic novel.

Whether you are planning to publish your own comic or graphic novel, or want to provide the best reproducible art possible, this item is a must-have for your professional library.

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BOUND For Glory

TRADE PAPERBACK AND GRAPHIC NOVEL REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH TPB

JLA/Avengers
DC/Marvel
$19.99, color, 208 pgs.
Writer: Kurt Busiek; Artist: George Pérez
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★★

This long-awaited collection — the embodiment of a 20-year-old dream of fanboys everywhere — gets four stars alone for the incomparable, gorgeous art of George Pérez, who effortlessly draws every single member of The Avengers and The JLA and their respective rogues' galleries. Wow!

Kudos also go to writer Kurt Busiek, whose rich knowledge and love for these characters rivals that of Pérez. This inter-company crossover has all the devices of mega-events: Two cosmic-powered villains (Kronos and The Grandmaster) use The Avengers and JLA as pawns, making them fight each other. (There's an epic battle between Thor and Superman.) Then, they join forces, upon realizing they're on the same side. It's what the fans wanted to see.

What helps is Busiek's in-jokes and deep characterization of the heroes. For instance, Superman and Captain America don't get along because they're too much alike. This is worth every penny; especially for fans who couldn't afford the fancy hardcover edition for $75.

Reprints *JLA/Avengers* #1-4
www.dccomics.com
www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-1401219574

Nocturnal Conspiracies: Nineteen Dreams
NBM

$14.95, two-color, 128 pgs.
Writer and artist: David B.; Translator: Joe Johnson
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★

French comics veteran David B., author of *Epileptic* and co-founder of L'Association, owns the mind behind *Nocturnal Conspiracies: Nineteen Dreams*. The book's concept is simple and summarized in its title: It's about 19 dreams.

Actually, it's about 19 dreams B. had between December 1979 and September 1994. In most cases, dreams disappear from the sleeper's memories not long after he or she has them, unless they're recorded in some way. B. wrote notes about his.

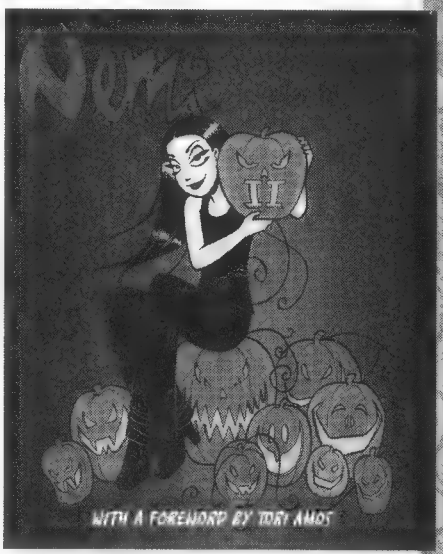
Nocturnal Conspiracies: Nineteen Dreams is a curious thing to look through. As expected, its imagery radiates surrealism. However, the surrealism doesn't increase the comfort level for readers. It does, after all, present the author's dreams, which can be seen as windows to the mind for people in the field of psychology. Such elements and themes as soldiers and oppression are repeated, and there are also plenty of women.

Futuropolis originally published the French version in 2005.

www.nbmpublishing.com
ISBN-13: 978-1-56163-541-2
ISBN-10: 1-56163-541-3

Nemi Vol. II
Titan Books

$14.95, color, 144 pgs.
Writer and artist: Lise Myhre
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★



Sure, there've been other comics characters that embrace the philosophy of unfiltered opinion, and Lise Myhre's Nemi Montoya is a hilarious and insightful addition to that *oeuvre*. Cynical, sexy, honest, and Goth, she is someone you love to watch but not get on the wrong side of.

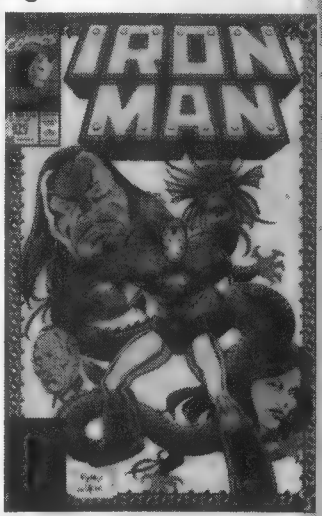
This second collection of strips includes a short story and a foreword by, appropriately, Tori Amos. The book looks great and is easy to read again and again. The main downside was the need for closer editing, as several of the strips appear more than once.

With occasional adult conversations and mature topics, this isn't for kids. However, teens and adults who cater to the cynical side of entertainment will enjoy *Nemi*. Those new to *Nemi* shouldn't be surprised to find themselves seeking out the first volume of strips after they read this one.

www.titanbooks.com
ISBN: 9781845766146

Iron Man: The Dragon Seed Saga
Marvel

$16.99, color, 160 pgs.; Writer: John Byrne; Artists: Paul Ryan, Bob Wiacek, Mark Bright
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



The creative team of John Byrne and Paul Ryan did a great job on this title for a short, yet memorable, run. Ryan (once definitive *Iron Man* artist Bob Layton's art assistant) is a rock-steady artist in the medium, not to mention underrated. He draws a good-lookin' Shellhead. Byrne's prose demonstrates that he's just as comfortable writing as he is drawing.

They reestablish The Mandarin as one of Iron Man's deadliest foes and pits Iron Man against eight dragons, including Fin Fang Foom from the Stan Lee-Jack Kirby pre-Marvel-heroes days. Jim Rhodes becomes Iron Man again, setting up his War Machine time under the next creative team. The two Iron Men battle Fin, The Mandarin, and a wizard named Chen Hsu. No one gets away unscathed — not Iron Man, Rhodes, or The Mandarin.

Marvel should have included *Iron Man* #267-269 in this collection. Not only is it the beginning of Ryan's tenure, but it sets up this story, introducing Chen Hsu. They would have had a stronger product if they' done so. Nonetheless, this volume is worth the money.

Reprints: *Iron Man* (Vol. 1) #270-275

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0785131310

Dragon Ball Vol. 1 — Collector's Edition

Viz

$19.99, color and b/w, 192 pgs.
Writer and artist: Akira Toriyama
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★★½

JUST DON'T THINK ABOUT THEM, LORD YAMCHA JUST DON'T THINK ABOUT THEM...
MUH, MUH MUH, MOUNDS
THUH, THOSE MUH, MOUNDS...
TO BE CONTINUED

The first 11 chapters of Akira Toriyama's classic '80s manga series *Dragon Ball* are repackaged in a hardcover edition. The series stars a powerful 14-year-old monkey-tailed boy named Son Goku. One day, Bulma, a 16-year-old inventor on summer vacation, visits him. She's searching for the seven legendary "dragon balls." When collected, the "dragon balls" give the one who posses them incredible power in the form of a wish.

Wouldn't you know: Son Goku has one of them. Bulma convinces him to join her on her journey. As expected, they encounter a variety of eccentric characters along the way. At one point, they rescue a village from a bully shape-shifting pig named Oolong. He's forced to join them or face death!

Dragon Ball Volume 1 — Collector's Edition is funny. Even if it's a "collector's edition," it serves as a great introduction to the saga for anyone with an interest. Since the *Dragon Ball* television series and films originate from the material within these pages, it's also interesting to see how the characters were originally portrayed and how some sequences were changed during pre-production.

www.viz.com
ISBN-13: 978-1-4215-2613-3
ISBN-10: 1-4215-2613-1

Astro City: The Dark Age Vol. 1

DC/WildStorm

$29.99, color, 256 pgs.
Writer: Kurt Busiek; Artists: Brent Anderson, Alex Ross
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½

In the first half of a 16-part saga, Kurt Busiek, Brent Anderson, and Alex Ross reveal one of the darkest chapters in the history of Astro City, shown through the eyes of brothers Charles and Royal Williams, a cop and a criminal, respectively. With a tale taking place in the turbulent 1970s, Busiek interweaves the unrest of the American people during the Vietnam and Watergate eras into the plot.

He also reveals the fate of The Silver Agent — Astro City's "Greatest Shame" — something he has teased about in prior *Astro City* installments. It's a satisfying revelation. He also capitalizes on the martial arts and blaxploitation phases of the 1970s, with several characters inspired by these two trends.

Busiek and company take a long, hard look at the definition of heroes, how the public adores them, then tears them down and uses them as scapegoats, but once again calls on them when they're needed.

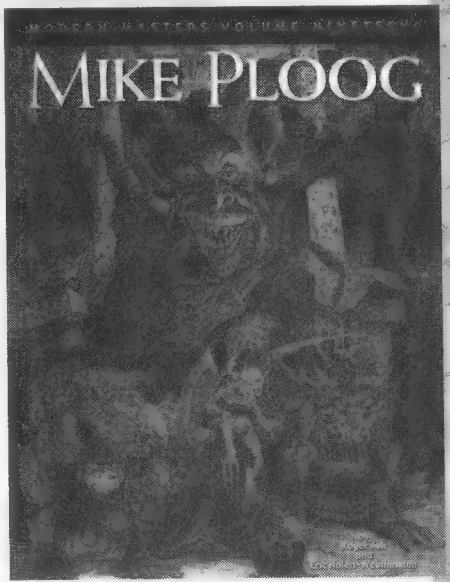
Reprints *Astro City: The Dark Age* #1-8

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 978-1401218683

Modern Masters Vol. 19: Mike Ploog

TwoMorrows

$14.95, b/w and color, 120 pgs.
Writer: Roger Ash; Editor: Eric Nolen-Weatherington
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★½



I started reading comics in the 1970s because of Marvel's monster and horror lines. I kept reading comics because of Mike Ploog. There was nothing else like his work in comics at the time. J.M. DeMatteis hits it right on the head when he writes in his introduction that he's always responded to "the flow of Mike's art, the almost palpable texture, the impeccable storytelling, and — most important — the heartfelt humanity."

Readers get to learn more about the man behind those images in these interviews, conducted by Roger Ash. Ploog takes us from his early love of Westerns, his work in animation, and his time with Will Eisner to Roy Thomas' invitation to work on Marvel's new line of horror titles, beginning with *Werewolf by Night*. Ploog's work on films ranging from *Little Shop of Horrors* to *Shrek* is detailed through both words and sketches, followed by his return to comics work with *Stardust Kid* and *Abadazad*. There's also a section on how the artist approaches storytelling and breaking down a comic-book page.

Best of all, the book is copiously illustrated with both sketches and finished work, and the final section is an art gallery featuring eight color pages.

www.twomorrows.com
ISBN-10: 1605490075
ISBN-13: 978-1605490076

The United States Constitution — A Graphic Adaptation
Hill and Wang

$16.95, color, 150 pgs.

Writer: Johnathan Hennessey; Artist: Aaron McConnell

reviewed by **Michael Tierney** ★★★

The Constitution of the United States may be the most important government document ever written.

This graphic novel is a reader-friendly tour through the history of that complex document, revealing, not only the details behind the words, but the genius that inspired those who crafted it.

Starting with the Preamble, Jonathan Hennessey and Aaron McConnell use every storytelling trick in the book except character narrative. This is not a story as seen through the eyes of an individual. Instead, this is more of a textbook, utilizing realistic artistry with cartoon symbolism in an examination of the tug of war between states' rights and the national government, when representatives from the first 13 colonies battled to ratify the seven Constitutional Articles and their subsequent compromises, resulting in the 27 amendments.

This is entertaining and provides both a good legal and historical reference. But it's not something the reader likely to consume in a single sitting; its pages are packed with information.

http://us.macmillan.com/HillAndWang.aspx

Justice League of America: The Injustice Gang
DC

$19.99, color, 144 pgs.; Writers and artists: Various

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½

On the eve of Green Arrow and Black Canary's wedding, the latest and deadliest incarnation of The Injustice Gang — a team of super-villains that includes Lex Luthor, The Joker, Doctor Light, Bizarro, and Gorilla Grodd — attacks The JLA. Good triumphs over evil, as the heroes battle the villains in a straight-ahead, unapologetic super-hero slugfest.

What's great about this story is that artist Ed Benes, who's come into his own with these characters, draws it. Readers need one of these slugfests every time these characters are reimagined and retooled for a new generation. Moreover, they need a current "hot" artist to strut his or her stuff, showcasing the ability to draw a large cast of characters and draw them competently — if not well — and keep track of them in large crowded scenes that would make artist *extraordinaire* George Pérez proud. Benes delivers on all levels. This is perhaps the be-all and end-all of the Justice League/Injustice Gang battles: a fun story.

Reprints *Justice League of America* #13-16

www.dccomics.com

ISBN: 978-1401218027

Grimm Fairy Tales Vol. 3
Zenescope

$15.99, color, 176 pgs.

Writers: Ralph Tedesco, *et al.*; Artists: Various

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

For the uninitiated, *Grimm Fairy Tales* takes readers into new versions of such fairytales as "The Three Little Pigs," "Billy Goat's Gruff," and "Beauty and the Beast." Their guide is Sela, who offers people insight to their problems by showing them that it could be worse. Sela has gained her abilities and her book from an ancient being and granted her powers for the sole purpose of helping humanity, even if her advice sometimes falls on deaf ears.

Those deaf ears include three amoral, racist teens in Zenescope's twisted version of "The Three Little Pigs." This is the best story in the collection, as they get what's coming to them when they turn down the option of repenting their sins.

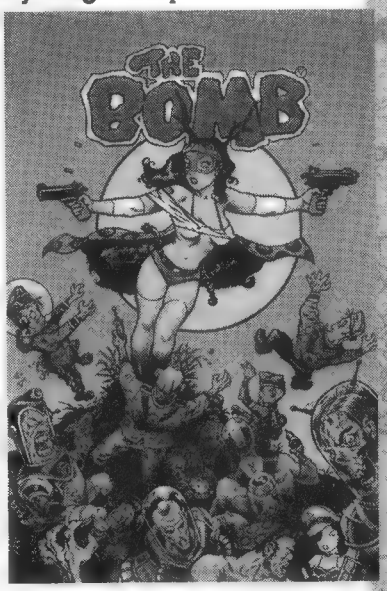
At the end, Belinda is introduced. She is a rival of Sela, who, rather than using fairy tales to help people, uses them to make their lives worse. What a great way to lead into Vol. 4.

Reprints *Grimm Fairy Tales* #13-18

www.zenescope.com

ISBN: 0978687493

The Bomb
Asylum Press
$14.95, b/w, 176 pgs.
Writer and artist: Steve Mannion
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★½



Steve Mannion's *The Bomb* — originally published through Atom Bomb Comics — has been described as "*Indiana Jones* meets *Mad*." It's more like "*Lara Croft: Tomb Raider* meets *Mad*," since Fearless Dawn (the female lead) and Croft are both scantily clad, curvaceous babes.

Mannion's style is reminiscent of those of E.C. comics and Eric Powell (of *The Goon*). Wacky and quirky but well done, it sends up many ads in comics during the 1960s and '70s, not to mention Archie's *Betty and Veronica*. Mannion's *The Bomb* has plenty of narrative captions (something less and less common in comics today), and he crams nine panels onto a page when he can without making it feel cramped. While it's worth looking into, be warned: You won't get it done in 10 minutes. Come to think of it, that's not bad.

Reprints *The Bomb* #1-4, *The Bomb Swimsuit Edition* #1

www.asylumpress.com
ISBN: 978-0-9768509-9-1

Gawa Kawa
Viz
$8.99, b/w, 187 pgs.
Writer and artist: Rie Takada
reviewed by **Bernard C. Cormier** ★★½

Originally presented in English within the pages of *Shojo Beat* between April and August 2008, *Gawa Kawa* is collected here.

Aimed squarely at girls (and boys who like supernatural tales), *Gawa Kawa*'s a romantic story about a young demon tempted to give up everything for a sexy human ghost-whispering stud.

The purpose in the life of Rara, the young demon, is to cause mischief. Almost as an incentive, the more mischief she causes, the more power she'll obtain. However, the shining light of romance cuts through to her boiling heart in the form of Retsu Aku (the aforementioned sexy guy).

Here's the catch: Her powers (along with her very existence) will slowly disappear, as she does "good" things.

What will she do?

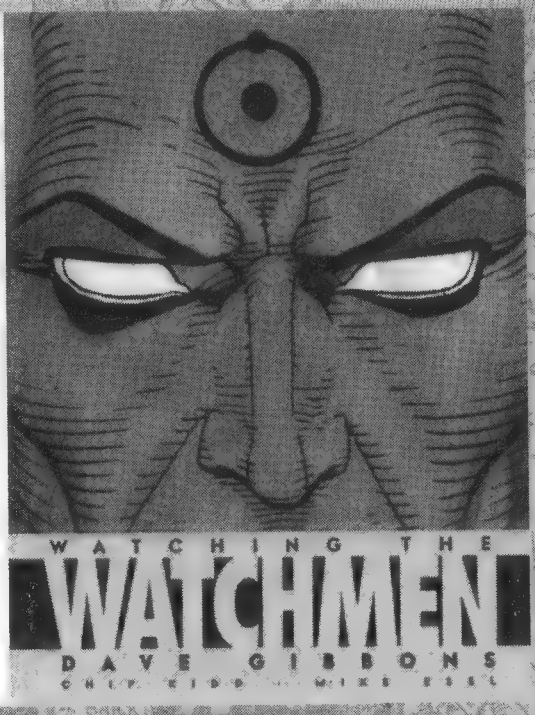
Gawa Kawa's an interesting book. Unlike some comics aimed at young teens, it does not shy away from such subjects as suicide and homosexuality. That's a good thing. Its only true flaws are the panels involving invisible beings and ghosts. Those panels were not all clear as to which characters were supposed to be transparent.

www.viz.com
ISBN-13: 978-1-4215-2259-3
ISBN-10: 1-4215-2259-4

Watching the Watchmen
Titan Books
$39.99, color, 256 pgs.
Writer: Dave Gibbons, *et al.*; Artists: Gibbons, John Higgins
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

One of the most celebrated comics of all time, *Watchmen* is coming to the big screen in early March. This tome, *Watching The Watchmen*, gives a behind-the-scenes look at what went into making the original comics series, as told by *Watchmen* co-creator and artist Dave Gibbons and original colorist John Higgins.

If you're expecting something scandalous or controversial about the genesis of *Watchmen*, you won't find it here. It seems that, today, there has to be that sort of content in order to make it interesting to some readers. *Watching* is an exception to that rule. There are: copies of co-creator and writer Alan Moore's hand-written correspondence with Gibbons and original series editor Len Wein; Moore's scripts; early character designs; and fan letters from Archie Goodwin and then-DC Comics Publisher Jenette Kahn, among others. This is an intriguing story of what went into making this beloved series so great.



www.titanbooks.com
ISBN: 978-1848560413

Retro OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

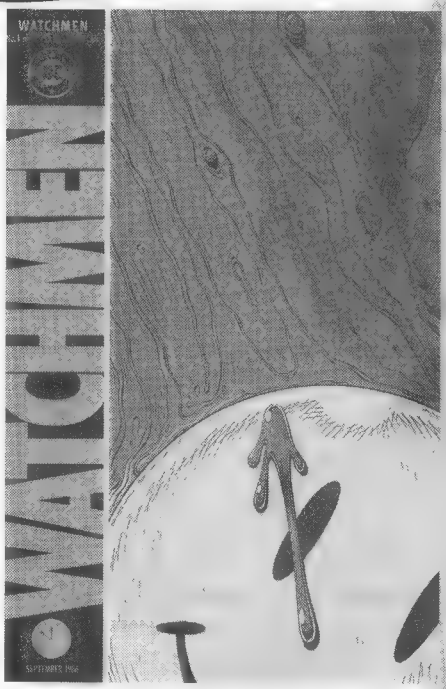
Watchmen #1-12

DC

$1.50 @, color, 32 pgs. @

Writer: Alan Moore; Artist: Dave Gibbons

Discussed by **"Smiley" John Petty and "Watchful" Jim Johnson**



Jim Johnson: All right, so you didn't like Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight*, but at the same time we have an even better masterpiece to contend with. And a masterpiece it is, because even my college professors said so. And they're right: This Alan Moore guy is a genius. This might look like an average super-hero story set in a world on the brink of war, but it's a multi-layered and wide-ranging story that could only be told in a sequential-art format. Such characters as The Comedian and Rorschach are well-developed and intriguing. It's full of symbolism and modern allegory. And it's an incredibly suspenseful mystery that impresses and surprises at every opportunity. It might just be the best story I've ever read, period. I'm even going to write a term paper on it. But I don't expect an uncultured dweeb like you to appreciate the intricacies of this story, so I'll speak in shorter words from now on.

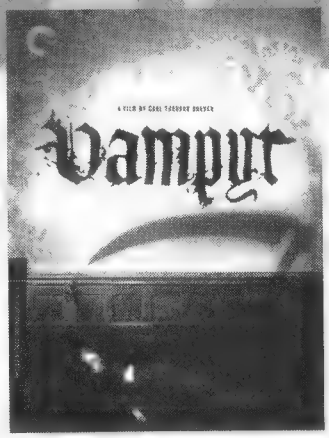
John Petty: Geez, Johnson, there you go again. You go to college and get all pretentious, using words like "sequential art." It's a comic book, you polysyllabic putz! And a pretty disappointing one at that, especially after waiting an extra month for that last issue. All these guys do is talk, talk, talk about the end of the world. Boring! All this Moore guy has done is take a bunch of characters nobody cares about — like Peter Cannon, Doctor Solar, and Blue Beetle — and turn them into new characters nobody cares about, like Ozymandias, Doctor Manhattan, and Nite Owl. (Who is just whiny to the Max. Well, Lord, just put him out of his misery with a bullet in the head, why don't you?) Then, it's as if Moore got tired of writing about these losers and started writing a pirate story that has nothing to do with anything! And this goes on for *12 issues*? Nice try, but this is another here-today-gone-tomorrow idea from a writer no one will ever hear from again.

Johnson: You hear that? That's the sound of a 12-issue epic flying right over your head. Just like when we were kids, you completely missed the point of the book. Its brilliant disguise as just another super-hero comic might easily fool shallow thinkers such as yourself, but each issue is far more than 10-minute bathroom reading matter. Among the "boring" talking is a highly intense dialogue between Rorschach and his shrink that is probably the most chilling narrative I've ever read. Doc Manhattan's self-exile on Mars was hauntingly beautiful. And the apocalyptic climax is the stuff nightmares are made of. Did you actually *read* this — or just look at the pictures?

Petty: Yeah, that's the stuff comics are made of: intense conversations between a killer and his psychiatrist. What's next, "Mafia on the Couch Comics"? That'll be a hit when I start singing soprano. And what was up with the "death by giant squid"? That belongs in a Godzilla movie, not in a book like this. "We have nothing to fear but calamari itself." And, yeah, the pictures are pretty, but does this Gibbons guy know that it's not against the law to use something other than a nine-panel grid over and over and over again? Sheesh. Besides, you've got it exactly backwards: This *is* just another dopey super-hero comic disguised as literature for all you pretentious elitists out there who can only read comic books if you can call them something dumb like "sequential art." "Who Watches The Watchmen?" Who cares? Me, I'll go back to reading *'Mazing Man*. Now *there's* a book that'll be around forever.

VIDEO REVIEWS

Vampyr
The Criterion Collection
$39.95, 73 mins. (plus extras), 2 DVDs
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★★



In case you missed this set when it came out some months ago, you shouldn't have. At this point, the sole reason to hold onto that recording of *Vampyr* off Turner Classic Movies is the discussion by host Robert Osborne (a worthwhile reason). Criterion has done it again, this time selecting one of the most influential horror movies from the early 20th century. Though *Nosferatu* (1922) and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919) came before *Vampyr* (1932) and both influenced it, it seems highly unfair for the *magnum opus* of director Carl Theodor Dreyer to have gone largely unnoticed except by film and horror connoisseurs.

A man comes to a town overrun by vampires and tries to survive and solve the mystery behind the infestation. What percentage of horror films through the decades since has utilized this plot or a derivation thereof?

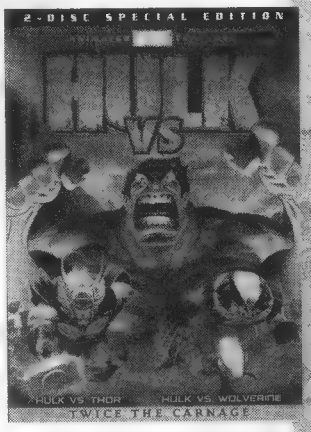
While not as in-your-face as *Nosferatu* nor as Expressionist as *Caligari*, *Vampyr* in part utilized elements from both films to create one of the most haunting milieus in horror history. While not a silent film, Dreyer's script called for little dialogue and few sound effects, and his trick cinematography (olden-days nomenclature for "visual effects") is stunning. Yes, some of the effects' impact is minimized by its age, but certainly not all of it; combined with the incredible subtlety of the action and story, it makes a disturbing viewing experience.

So why is this movie not more well-known? Its subtlety is one — especially over the years, as Hollywood horror has opted for shock-and-awe-type frights. Another is that it came out a year after Tod Browning's *Dracula* had stunned the world. *Vampyr*'s subtle haunting simply didn't stand out so soon after *Dracula* was released.

With Criterion's remastering and gorgeous packaging — including a 200-page book with the original script and the novella that inspired the movie — this set is worth every penny.

www.criterion.com

Hulk Vs.: 2-Disc Special Edition
Lionsgate
$24.98, 37 mins. (Wolverine)/45 mins. (Thor), (plus extras)
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★



While not designed for younger viewers (there is blood in both cartoons and excessive violence), this two-disc Hulk slugfest is a delight for Hulk fans.

In *Hulk vs. Wolverine*, The Jade Giant faces off against the Canadian mutant, with a group of mercenaries, including Deadpool and Sabretooth, standing by to pick up the pieces.

Hulk vs. Thor, the longer of the two cartoons, brings Bruce Banner and his emerald alter-ego to Asgard to aid Loki in his plot to kill Thor once and for all.

The *Thor* piece is more thought-out, with a deeper plot than the *Wolverine* cartoon, which serves more as a teaser for the new *Wolverine and the X-Men* cartoon on Nickelodeon and the upcoming *Wolverine* feature film in May.

One redeeming factor of *Hulk vs. Wolverine* is the first animated appearance of Deadpool. He has the best lines of any of the characters and almost begs to have a solo project of his own. Whether that could happen remains to be seen.

The quality of both cartoons is on a par with Lionsgate previous direct-to-DVD releases, which is to say it's outstanding.

www.lionsgatedvd.com

Horror Double Feature: Chamber of Horrors/The Brides of Fu Manchu
Warner Home Video
$19.98, 99 mins./94 mins.
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★

Warner Home Video has unvaulted this pair of 1966 horror films for its "Horror Double Feature" line, and they live up to expectations. Schlock, laughs, gore, horrific acting: They're all here! The best element is the Fear Flasher (not a character) and the Horror Horn (a noisemaker) employed in *Chamber of Horrors* to warn audiences of an impending scary or gory moment. And it totally works, if your eyes aren't too watered from all the laughing to see what's going on.

Fu Manchu has Christopher Lee as the diabolical mastermind (created in 1912 by Sax Rohmer). For the '60s (welcome to the world of *24*), the torture and execution scenes probably were quite intense, and there's still punch today. However, Lee as Fu Manchu is the standout reason to watch this film.

These movies are what they are, and the appropriate audiences know who they are. Those people (which include me) likely will enjoy these on a regular basis. They have Halloween-party entertainment written all over them.

www.warnervideo.com
ISBN: 1-4198-7424-1

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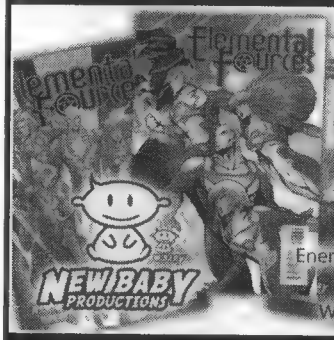

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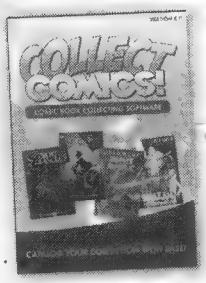

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KITTY
YOU ARE NOW ENTERING CENTERTOWN, U.S.A.... POPULATION 50,000 -- INCLUDING KITTY!!!
WHY, THESE RAGS ARE POSITIVELY WEEKS OLD!
AH! KALLY FINALLY SAVED UP THREE CENTS TO MAIL MY INVITATION TO THE MID-SUMMER FORMAL! THAT'S DREAMY!
EXCEPT THAT I HAVEN'T A THING TO WEAR-- BUT NOTHING!

by MICHELLE NOLAN

Notwithstanding the success of non-blondes Veronica Lodge and Patsy Walker in comics of the 1940s and 1950s, a whole lot of blondes really *did* have more fun back in the wacky, way-out day, to steal a phrase. Now, though, finding and finishing the many short-run series is some of the most fun you can have in comics collecting.

Just for entertainment, I plucked five of the most elusive blondes in comics to feature in this issue's Retroviews: St. John's *Lucy the Real Gone Gal* #1-4 and *Kitty* #1, Marvel's *Dolly Dill* #1 and *Patty Powers* #4-7 (the complete four-issue set), and Avon's *Going Steady with Betty* #1, which became *Betty and Her Steady* with #2. (I cheated with Dolly Dill, a brunette.)

As ground-breaking and worthwhile as the *Gerber Photo-Journal Guides* were when they came out two decades ago, they vastly underrated the scarcity of many humorous 1950s comics, including all 12 of the above issues. They all received 5s except for the ridiculous 4s awarded to the uncommon *Lucy the Real Gone Gal* #1, #3, and #4. 1 feel certain this daffy dozen should all be 6- or 7-rated issues. They are all darned tough to find, but well worth the search.

I came up with an intriguing discovery when I read through the four issues of *Lucy the Real Gone Gal* from 1953-54 and the *Kitty* one-shot from 1948. In her post-Senorita Rio days at Fiction House, the talented Lily Renee drew the *Kitty* cover, including a prominent signature, and also signed the eight-page Kitty story, the only one in the book. Kitty is a typical teenager who says things like, "Why, these rags are positively weeks old!" when looking at several gorgeous gowns in her closet after being invited to the "mid-summer formal."

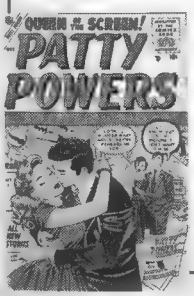
When I opened *Lucy the Real Gone Gal* #1, which appeared nearly five years after *Kitty* #1, I found the Kitty story re-logoed

Patty Powers #4 Oct 1955 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Al Hartley
Inks: Hartley
Cover: Hartley

Untitled Patty Powers story • 7 pp.

The Board of Directors of Cosmic Pictures goes ga-ga over Patty when they get a glimpse of one of her old TV shows.



Patty, in her old role as TV personality Della Vision, hilariously interviews Whiz Comet the Space-Ranger Cadet and Laddie-Tim-Tim, the most famous dog in America.

TV Daze • 4 pp.; Untitled Patty Powers story • 4 pp.; Untitled Patty Powers story • 6 pp.; "Patty's Wardrobe" • 1 pg.; "Patty's Page" • 1 pg.; "So Much in Love!" • 2 text pp.

No CGC copies

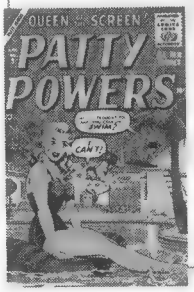
Then 10¢ NOW $50

Patty Powers #5 Apr 1956 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Al Hartley
Inks: Hartley
Cover: Hartley

Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.

It could only happen in a Marvel comic book: Patty finds herself cast in the role of Lorna the Jungle Girl in a film set on location in Africa.



An outrageously racist image of a native says, "We'd be delighted to assist you in your theatrical venture at our standard scale rate of five dollars per person per day." It is utterly amazing that the Comics Code let this story through, even in 1956.

Untitled Patty Powers story • 4 pp.; Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.; Untitled My Girl Pearl story • 4 pp.; Patty's Page" • 5 pp.; "That's My Bill" • 2 text pp.

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© Marvel

as "Lucy." (Is re-logoed a word? If it isn't, it should be!) No other names are changed, nor is anything else different, except — Lily Renee's signature is taken off the story! The other Lucy tale is original and is drawn in Renee's style; indeed, perhaps it's an inventory story by Renee, since *Kitty* was a one-shot. But wait — the Sally story in *Kitty* #1 is re-logoed "Ginny" in *Lucy* #1. One can only wonder why a one-shot backup character in a five-year-old comic would have been re-logoed. Why not just reprint it? Ah, the mysteries of old comic books! Unlike many publishers of the day, St. John rarely did teen humor comics.

The scarce *Lucy the Real Gone Gal* #4 (Feb 54) doesn't appear in the *Photo-Journal*. It's presented here in all its glory, as two classmates, each with an "S" on their chests, watch bobby-soxer Lucy walk out of a tailor shop with her "S" converted to a dollar sign! This is the best issue, with three Lucy stories and four Lucy shorts. These stories of teen antics are pretty far out — they're a lot more frenetic than their DC or Marvel counterparts, much less the Archie series. "The Real Gone Gal" label — which did not appear in the indicia — has nothing to do with beatniks, but it would have fit right in a few years later.

When the *Photo-Journal* appeared, it listed *Going Steady with Betty* #1 (Dec 49) and *Betty and Her Steady* #2 (Apr 50) as part of the Avon one-shot series of the late 1940s and early 1950s. This, however, was incorrect. The indicias of both #1 and #2 indicate bi-monthly publication, even though they were separated by four months. The eponymous wild and wacky blonde Betty and her opportunistic boyfriend Ozzie were shameless knockoffs of DC's licensed feature *A Date with Judy*, but both Avon issues featured innovations.

The cover of *Betty* #1 featured a photo of the Ray Anthony Band while cartoonish images of Betty and Ozzie danced along with another couple, with Ozzie ogling the other girl! *Betty* #2 tried an odd experiment covering 31 of the 32 pages: Two romance text stories occupied the bottom half of each page, while four Betty and Ozzie stories were featured above the text. I've never seen any other comic book in any genre try this experiment. In addition, the painted cover of #2 seemed to indicate a serious romance comic, just as a time in 1950 when the market was overwhelmed by the explosion of romance titles. When Avon dropped all of its

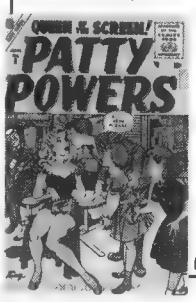
LUCY in Miss Pin-up
OH, WALLY, THAT'S THE MOST SENSATIONAL NEWS SINCE ADAM PROPOSED TO EVE!
JUST THINK! THIS VERY SECOND, WALLY APPROACHES ...TO GIVE ME HIS FRAT PIN! I COULD SWOON!
GOSH, I CAN'T WAIT TO PIN THIS ON MY DREAM BEAU! WHAT AN EVENT!
ALL SOMEONE WARN WALLY TROUBLE LIES AHEAD!
HMM... THERE GOES WALLY! WHAT'S HIS HANDSOME HURRY? IS THAT A FRAT PIN I SEE? HMMM...
...AND SO, LUCY, I WANT YOU TO CHERISH THIS PIN, AND...
HELLOSIE, WALLY, DEAR! WHOSE ITTY-BITTY FRAT PIN IS THAT?
WANDA! NO... OH... NO... YOU ...DON'T!

Patty Powers #6 Jun 1956 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Al Hartley
Inks: Hartley
Cover: Hartley

Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.

Percy Como selects Patty to star in his latest film — and picks Patty's rival, Flame, to dub Patty's voice.



A nice period piece, this is an ideal example of how well the prolific Al Hartley could draw pulchritude.

Untitled Patty Powers story • 4 pp.

Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.

Untitled My Girl Pearl story • 4 pp.

"Patty's Page" • 5 pp.

"A Lesson for Lola" • 2 text pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $30

© Marvel

Patty Powers #7 Oct 1956 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Al Hartley
Inks: Hartley
Cover: Hartley

Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.

Pub Jaxon, Patty's publicity man, pulls out all the stops to prove to reporters that Patty lives in an upscale home.

Patty, showing good sense and a charming sense of humility, welcomes the reporters to the home she has just bought — a trailer in her driveway!

Untitled Patty Powers story • 4 pp.; Untitled Patty Powers story • 5 pp.; Untitled My Girl Pearl story • 4 pp.; "Patty's Page" • 5 pp.; "Sweet and Lovely" • 2 text pp.

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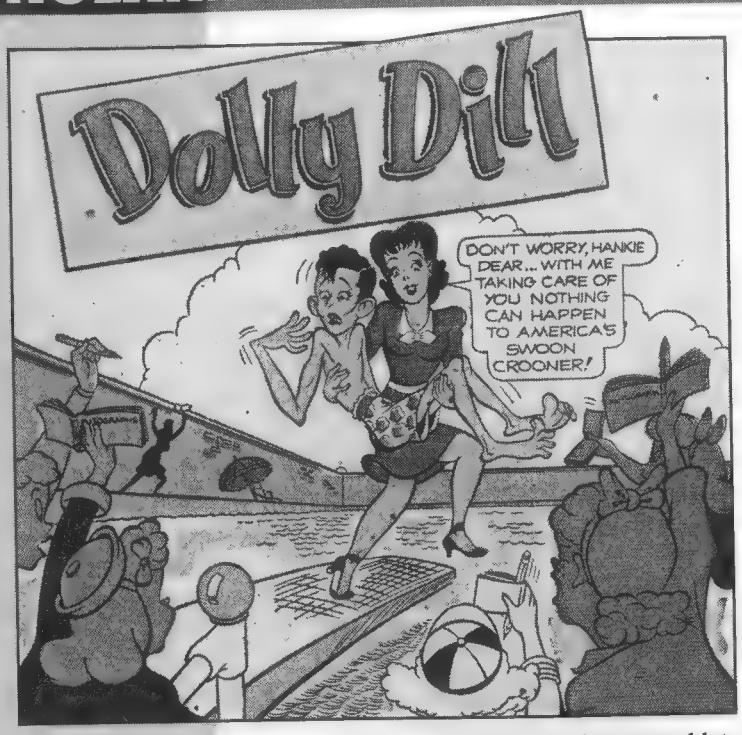


romance titles — though a couple returned later — Betty and Ozzie were dropped forever.

Hollywood wannabe *Dolly Dill* was an early "working girl" book from Marvel, under the imprint of Newsstand Publications, with a sole undated 1945 issue. The four seven-page Dolly Dill stories, however, weren't even close to being as entertaining as the early appearances of Millie the Model, Nellie the Nurse, and Tessie the Typist, and Dolly was never seen again, as far as I know. It's amazing how many characters, whether featured in the title or in the back of the book, appeared only a few times in the 1940s and 1950s and then disappeared forever.

I wrote about Marvel's *Patty Powers/Della Vision* connection about three years ago (***CBG*** #1613) but I couldn't help re-reading the four issues of *Patty Powers* in order to provide the Retroviews. (I would have included *Della Vision* #1-3, but I'm missing #2.) *Patty Powers* is a pop-cultural delight: a true creature of the 1950s, with some of the most glamorous art and funkiest stones of the period, all credited to Stan Lee and artist Al Hartley. One of the great in-jokes in 1950s comics is the Patty Powers tale in #5 in which the budding movie star goes to Africa to play Lorna the Jungle Girl! I love that type of wacky crossover, which was more common in the 1940s and 1950s than many people realize.

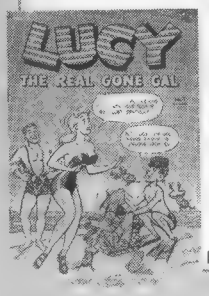
There's also a mystery involving the *Patty Powers* series, which was listed but not pictured in the *Photo-Journal*. That's surprising, since these issues are far scarcer and more collectible

Lucy the Real Gone Gal #1 Jun 1953 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Lily Renee
Inks: Renee
Cover: Uncredited

Untitled Jelly Bean story • 5 pp.

Would-be starlet Jelly Bean Klinghoffer steals into a movie studio and finds herself sneaking into roles in *Purple Passion, Badmen and Bullets, Magnolia Mansions*, and other movies.



In what may have been Jelly Bean's only comic-book appearance, she wins four stars for sheer craziness.

Untitled Lucy story • 8 pp. (reprint of Kitty story from *Kitty* #1); "How Do I Love Thee?" (Lucy) • 3 pp.; "Strike 'em Spellbound!" (Rita) • 5 pp.; "Lucy's Cutouts" • 1 pp.; Untitled Ginny story • 6 pp. (reprint of Sally story from *Kitty* #1); "Gag-Bag" • 1 text pg.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $65

Lucy the Real Gone Gal #2 Aug 1953 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"Miss Pin-up" (Lucy) • 5 pp.

Lucy goes scrambling after Wally's fraternity pin and takes a tumble off a trellis.

Lucy cleverly gets "pinned" when Wally gallantly fixes a broken strap on her dress.

Untitled Kenny story • 8 pp.; "Lucy's Cutouts" • 2 pp.; "The Heavyweight" (Trudi) • 5 pp.; Untitled Pvt. Thistlewait story • 4 pp.; "Teacher's Pet" (Lucy) • 5 pp.; "Gag-Bag" • 1 text pg.; "Comedy Column" • 1 text pg.

No CGC copies

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Lucy the Real Gone Gal #3 Dec 1953 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils and Inks: Dave Berg, Mort Drucker
Cover: Drucker

"Bye-Bye-Ology" (Lucy) • 5 pp.

Wanda Farr tries to snag the new biology teacher at her party — but Lucy finds what he really wants to do is "beat feet and give these squares the air."

Who would have guessed a high-school biology teacher could have said, "Dig all these real nervous records going to waste! Zaggy MacGonigle and His Creamy Cats!"

Untitled Kenny story • 4 pp.; "Television Night" (Peggy) • 6 pp.; "All Modeled Up" (Lucy) • 6 pp.; "The Big Swap" (Lucy) • 7 pp.; "Teen Talk" • 1 pp.; "Blind Date Blues" • 2 text pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $45

Lucy the Real Gone Gal #4 Feb 1954 ★★★½

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

"The Lion's Den" (Lucy) • 7 pp.

Lucy's father orders the teen crowd to clean up the house because he must play host to the president of Scrunchies Cereal.

In a funny finish, Lucy's friends put Scrunchies posters all over the house and her father is shocked when the president loves it.

"Make up My Mind" (Lucy) • 1 pp.; "Double Talk" (Kenny) • 5 pp.; "Music Appreciation" (Lucy) • 1 pp.; "Butterfly Blues" (Lucy) • 7 pp.; "Picture This" (Lucy) • 1 pp.; "Higher Learning" (Lucy) • 1 pp.; "Star Performance" (Lucy) • 6 pp.; "It's a Dog's Life" • 2 text pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $45

© St. John

than a lot of the comics shown in those volumes. The *Photo-Journal* mistakenly listed the first issue of *Patty Powers* (#4) as Feb 56, but it's really Oct 55. The next issue (#5) was dated Apr 56. Such a six-month skip to a second issue was atypical of Marvel at the time. But, then, there was also a four-month skip between #6 (Jun 56) and #7 (Oct 56).

The other delight involving *Patty Powers* is the appearance of four-page My Girl Pearl stories in #5-7. The three tales are typical of the wonderfully wacky nature of that strip. In addition to appearing in 11 issues of her own title staggered over 1955-1961, Pearl Dimly appeared in several other Marvel humor titles. Great stuff!

In *Patty Powers* #5, Pearl is standing at a department store information booth when a lady asks her, "Where can I find a hat?" To which Pearl replies, "I dunno — where'd you lose one?" The battleaxe responds, "Young lady, I'm not looking for witticisms!" and Pearl responds, "That's good, because they don't sell any here!" On and on it goes, until the woman demands that Pearl be fired. The manager, though, tells her that he can't fire Pearl "because she doesn't work here!" It turns out she was just waiting for her boyfriend!

I love the scene in #6, when Pearl's boyfriend, Flash, tells her, "Let's start all over again from scratch ..." and Pearl says, "It's pretty hard to scratch when you don't itch!" Then there's the complaint Pearl receives in a movie theater in #7, when a grumpy guy tells her, "Lady, I can't hear a thing!" and Pearl replies, "I should hope not! This is a private conversation!"

BETTY AND HER STEADY
SURE IS TURNING OUT TO BE A SWELL NIGHT, HUH BETTY? IT'S JUST LIKE A DREAM HAVING YOU IN MY ARMS LIKE THIS. I COULD GO ON DANCING WITH YOU FOREVER.
UH-HUH, BUT I'M SURE YOU'D BE BOUND TO IMPROVE. BESIDES WE'D GET PRETTY DIZZY, DON'T YOU THINK?
"STAR GAZING"

Although I've been the victim of more than my share of "dumb blonde" jokes, I still enjoy finding a My Girl Pearl story I haven't read before. We can all use an extra laugh or two these days!

Going Steady with Betty #1 Dec 1949 ★★★

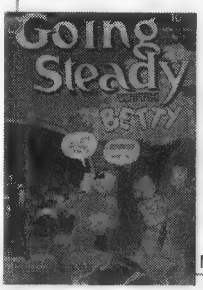
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Partial photo cover

Untitled Betty story • 7 pp.

Ozzie's cousin Helen "Jelly" Beans pays a visit, but Betty sees them and thinks he is cheating on her.

It's an ancient plot, but well handled with good-natured teens.

Untitled Betty story • 6 pp.
Untitled Betty story • 7 pp.
Untitled Betty story • 7 pp
"Ray Anthony" • 2 text pp.



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No CGC copies

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Betty and Her Steady #2 Apr 1950 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: F. Caron
Inks: Caron
Cover: Uncredited

"Love by Television" (Betty) • 9 pp.

Ozzie takes his old friend Millie Van Lips to a basketball game, but Betty spies them in her living room on TV and takes off for the stadium.

In a funny and clever finish, the two girls smear hot-dog mustard on each other, and Betty's parents see "the play of the game" when Ozzie takes Belly in his arms. (All stories in this issue were printed on half-pages, with the comics on top and the text piece on the bottom.)

"Teacher's Pet" (Betty) • 7 pp.; "Star Gazing" (Betty) • 8 pp.; "Opening Night" (Betty) • 7 pp.; "There's an End to Caring" • 16 text pp.; "I Paid for My Desire!" • 15 text pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $60

Kitty #1 Oct 1949 ★★★

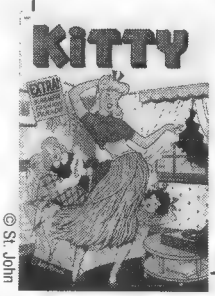
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Lily Renee
Inks: Renee
Cover: Renee

Untitled Kitty story • 8 pp.

Kitty, without a thing to wear to the formal, finds a bizarre way to circumvent her money problems.

Using her dad's money, Kitty "sells" $300 worth of dresses to herself — then amusingly tells her father he'll have to pay only $270 because of her employee discount.

"Kitty Cutouts" • 4 pp.; Untitled Kenny story • 8 pp.; Untitled Sally story • 6 pp.; Untitled Jack Potts story •1 pg.; "Two Hamburgers With" • 2 text pp.



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No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $45

Dolly Dill #1 ca. 1945 ★★★½

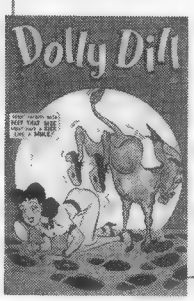
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Uncredited

Untitled Dolly Dill story • 7 pp.

Dolly impersonates singer Hankie Jordan's chauffeur and nearly drowns her heartthrob when she drives into a water tower.

This story is half-dream, half-reality, and all nonsensical nuttiness with minimal humor.

Untitled Dolly Dill story • 7 pp.
Untitled Dolly Dill story • 7 pp.
Untitled Dolly Dill story • 8 pp.
Untitled Dolly Dill story • 1 pg.



Best CGC copy: 8.0

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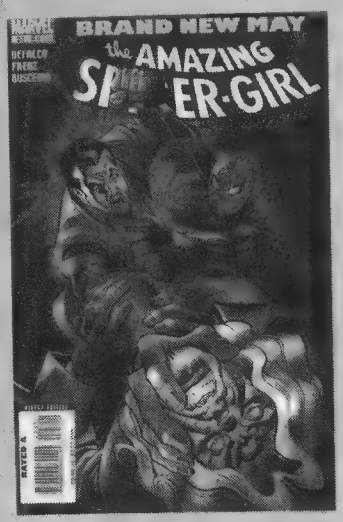

Amazing Spider-Girl #23
Marvel

$3.99, color, 28 pgs.
Writer: Tom DeFalco
Artists: Ron Frenz, Sal Buscema
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

If Brian Michael Bendis and Mark Bagley can do their version of the much-maligned "Clone Saga" in *Ultimate Spider-Man*, who says Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz can't do their version of it in the MC2 universe? It makes sense, since Spider-Girl was born out of the "Clone Saga" —the only positive outcome of that debacle.

Is the Spider-Girl we've been reading about for 10 years the real deal? If so, that's more believable than saying that the Spider-Man readers had been following from 1975-1996 was a clone, since this is an alternate reality. If not, DeFalco probably learned from the mistakes of the first "Clone Saga." It's better plotted and doesn't have too many writers, editors, and corporate suits involved.

There's a cool fight scene between a middle-aged Peter Parker and Kaine (a Parker clone), in which Peter beats the tar out of him. One neat visual device this issue is that the "Previously" page is designed to look like a Facebook page. Kudos to the creative team for this one.

www.marvel.com

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10	8200
11-12	4150
13	6175
14	3825
15	6175
16	3125
17	4350
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20	3825
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64	750
65-70	630
71-99	580
100	600
101	1200
➥A-Bomb cover	
102-126	525
127	600
128-150	525
151-157	480
158	750
➥Superman origin	
159-161	450
162	500
163-180	385
181-201	340
202-220	290
221-240	240
241	250
242	1200
➥1st Brainiac	
243-251	185
252	1200
➥1st Supergirl	
253	425
254	325
255	225
256-261	100
262	90
263	100
264-266	80
267	650
➥1st Colossal Boy	
268-270	80
271-275	65
276	125
➥Legion app.	
277-284	60
285	100
➥Legion app.	
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297	90
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300-316	50
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326-333	40
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409	15
410-411	13
412-415	12
416-418	11
419	14
420-422	11
423-424	10
425	19
426	10
427-436	8
437	29
➥Giant-size issue	
438-439	8
440	25
➥1st Grell Green Arrow	
441	12
442	8
443	26
➥Giant-size issue	
444-454	7
455-465	6
466	7
467-484	5
485	8
486-503	5
504-544	4
545-566	3
567-597	2
598	15
➥1st Checkmate	
599	2
600	5
601-659	2
660	3
661	2
662	4
663-682	2
683-684	3
685-687	2
687/CS	3
688-695	2
695/Variant	3
696-699	2
700	3
700/Platinum	5
701-769	2
770	4
771-774	2
775	5
775/2nd	4
776-799	2
800	4
801-810	2
811	5
812	8
812/2nd	2
813	4
814-817	3
818	4
819-825	3
826	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
827-828	3
829	6
829/Variant	3
830	4
831-843	3
844	6
845	5
846-849	3
850	4
851-857	3
858	6
859-861	3
862	0
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Ann 7	4
Ann 8	3
Ann 9	4

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104	850
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127	450
128	400
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162	310
163	425
164-169	310
170-180	255
181-199	235
200	350
201-209	260
210	2400
➥1st Krypto	
211-220	200
221-246	170
247	4400
➥1st Legion	
248-255	130
256	525
257-259	125
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➥Aquaman origin	
261-266	80
267	740
➥2nd Legion	
268	80
269	225
➥1st Aqualad	
270	80
271	225
➥Lex Luthor origin	
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275	145
276-280	65
281	60
282	95
283	100
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285-286	110
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302-305	55
306-323	45
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341-345	40
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➥1st White Witch	
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353-355	35
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358-366	30
367-372	25
373	22
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378	45
379-380	22
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382-389	22
390	30
391-400	22
401-402	21
403	50
404-415	20
416	18
417-427	13
428	28
➥1st Black Orchid	
429-430	15
431	28
➥Aparo Spectre	
432-433	15
434-435	12
436-441	10
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499	5
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500/CS	4
500/Silver	10
501-505	2
505/Variant	3
506-549	2
550	4
551-599	2
600	4
601-623	2
624	5
625	4
625/2nd	3
626	2
627-635	3
636	5
➥Identity Crisis tie	
637	4
638	3
639	5
640-641	4
642	6
643	12
644-648	3
649	10
➥Numbering moves to *Superman* (2nd series)	
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Adventures of the Fly ARCHIE, 1959	UNSLABBED Near Mint
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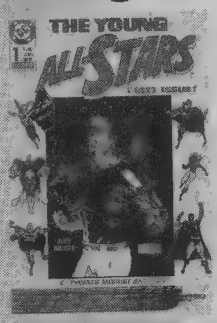
RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #1 ★★★½



"The Coming of The Young All-Stars"

A group of new, younger heroes is introduced in post-*Crisis* 1942.

In 1987, Roy Thomas, faced with a number of changes brought on by the events of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, opted to restart *All-Star Squadron* as *Young All-Stars*. Running just short of two and a half years, the series introduced a number of new heroes to the DC universe: heroes that, sadly, have been little-used or heard from since.

The first chapter of this six-part story quickly introduces "Iron" Munro, The Flying Fox, and Fury, along with Dan the Dyna-Mite, Tsunami, and Neptune Perkins.

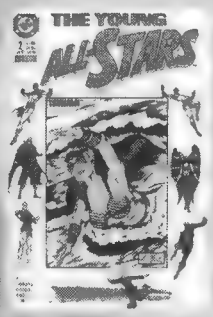
DC
Jun 1987 • 26 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils & Inks: Michael Bair, Brian Murray, et al.
Cover: Murray

Best CGC copy **9.8**

Then $1 NOW $1

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #2 ★★★½



© DC

DC
Jul 1987 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Murray

"A Gathering of Heroes!"

While The Shining Knight transports "Iron" Munro to All-Star headquarters, Axis Amerika, a new group of Nazi-based villains, attacks The All-Stars.

Roy and Dann Thomas do an outstanding job of advancing various subplots this issue, as well as bringing readers who missed the first issue up to speed.

With all the new characters around, both old and new readers can have fun trying to figure out which ones are "replacements" for the *Crisis*-removed Golden Age Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Green Arrow, Speedy, and Marvel Family.

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11-15..... 22

Adventures On the Planet of the Apes
MARVEL, 1975
1..... 9
2-5..... 4
5/30¢..... 20
6..... 4
6/30¢..... 20
7..... 4
7/30¢..... 20
8-11..... 4

Akira
MARVEL, 1988
1..... 8
2-3..... 5
4-33..... 4
34-38..... 7

Alarming Tales
HARVEY, 1957
1..... 110
2..... 65
3-4..... 50
5-6..... 40

Albedo
THOUGHTS & IMAGES, 1984
0..... 8
0/A..... 30
0/B..... 15
1..... 14
1/A..... 10
2..... 250
➥1st Usagi Yojimbo
3..... 10
4-5..... 4
6-8..... 3
9-14..... 2

All-American Comics
DC, 1939
1..... 5700
2..... 2000
3..... 1400
4-5..... 1250
6-7..... 980
8..... 1800
9-10..... 950
11..... 1025
12-15..... 950
16..... 72000
➥1st Green Lantern
17..... 15600
18..... 8800
19..... 13800
➥1st Atom
20..... 4850
21-23..... 2000
24..... 2200
➥1st Mid-Nite, Sargon
25..... 8300
➥Dr. Mid-Nite origin
26..... 3000
➥Sargon origin
27..... 3500
28-30..... 1250
31-40..... 1040
41-50..... 785
51-60..... 675
61..... 4400
➥1st Solomon Grundy
62-70..... 600
71-88..... 550
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100..... 850
101..... 1000
102..... 1650

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➥Supes vs. Shazam
C-60..... 20
➥Rudolph's Summer
C-62..... 12
➥Superman movie

All Star Batman and Robin Boy Wonder
DC, 2005
1/Both..... 5
1/Special..... 4
1/RRP..... 150
2/Both..... 4
3-8..... 3

All-Star Comics
DC, 1940
1..... 10000
2..... 3500
3..... 25000
➥1st JSA
4..... 3000
5..... 2800
➥1st Hawkgirl
6-7..... 1800
8..... 16000
➥1st Wonder Woman
9-11..... 1600
12-15..... 1400
16-25..... 1200
26-32..... 900
33..... 1800
➥Grundy appearance
34-35..... 900
36..... 1300
➥Batmn, Supes app.
37..... 900
38..... 975
➥Black Canary starts
39-49..... 900
50..... 975
➥Frazetta art
51-56..... 900
57..... 1200
➥25-year hiatus starts
58..... 12
➥1st Power Girl
59-61..... 6
62..... 8
63..... 6
64-65..... 7
66..... 8
67-68..... 6
69..... 10
70-73..... 6
74..... 8

All-Star Squadron
DC, 1981
1..... 4
2-10..... 2
11-46..... 1
47..... 3
48-67..... 1
Ann 1..... 2
Ann 2-Ann 3... 1

All-Star Superman
DC, 2006
1-9..... 3

All-Star Western
DC, 1970
1..... 30
2-3..... 15
4-5..... 14
6-9..... 9
10..... 260
➥1st Jonah Hex
11..... 75

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1941
1..... 16000
➥Cap America starts
2..... 4800
3..... 2850
4..... 2800
5-6..... 2100
7-10..... 1800
11-18..... 1275
19..... 3350
➥All-Winner Squad organized
21..... 3500
➥Scarce

All-Winners Comics
TIMELY, 1948
1..... 1800

Alpha Flight
MARVEL, 1983
1..... 5
➥1st Marrina, Puck
2-10..... 4
11-19..... 3
20-24..... 2
25-27..... 1
28..... 3
29-32..... 2
33..... 6
➥Wolverine appears
34..... 3
35-45..... 2
46..... 3

Do-It-Yourself Grading

While **CGC** keeps its grading standards privatese are the **traditional** condition definitions...

Mint

Abbreviated: **M**

This is a perfect comic book.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 10.0 grade.**

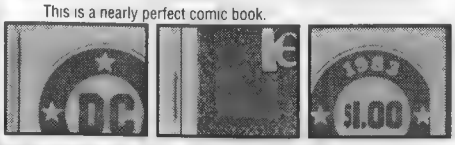
Its cover has full luster, with edges sharp and pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging, but it is not imperfectly printed or off-center.

Occasionally referred to as "Gem Mint," a term used by sportscard dealers.

Near Mint

Abbreviated: **NM**

This is a nearly perfect comic book.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 9.4 grade.**

Its cover shows barely perceptible signs of wear.

Its spine is tight, and its cover has only minor loss of luster and only minor printing defects. Some discoloration is acceptable in older comics — as are signs of aging.

Very Fine

Abbreviated: **VF**

A **Very Fine** copy has beginning signs of wear.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 8.0 grade.**

There can be slight creases and wrinkles at the staples, but it is a flat, clean issue with definite signs of being read a few times.

There is some loss of the original gloss, but it is in general an attractive comic book.

Fine

Abbreviated: **F, Fn**

A **Fine** comic book is a good-looking copy at first glance.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 6.0 grade.**

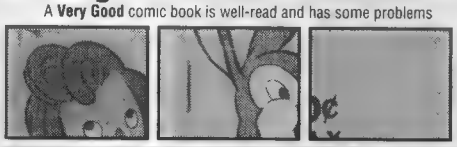
This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is usually no writing on the cover or tape repair.

Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted.

Very Good

Abbreviated: **VG**

A **Very Good** comic book is well-read and has some problems



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 4.0 grade.**

Most of the original gloss is gone. There are minor markings, discoloration, and/or heavier stress lines around the staples and spine.

The cover may have minor tears and/or corner creases, and spine-rolling is generally permissible.

Good

Abbreviated: **G, Gd**

A **Good** copy is a very worn comic book with nothing missing.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 2.0 grade.**

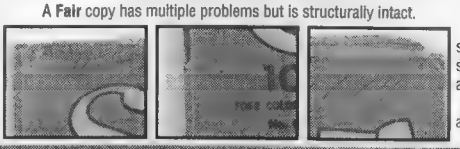
Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are generally permissible in this grade.

Older Golden Age comic books often come in this condition.

Fair

Abbreviated: **FA, Fr.**

A **Fair** copy has multiple problems but is structurally intact.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 1.0 grade.**

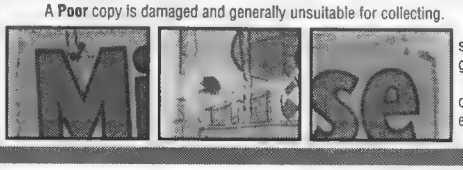
Copies may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, a badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, and tears.

Tape may be present and is always considered a defect.

Poor

Abbreviated: **P, Pr**

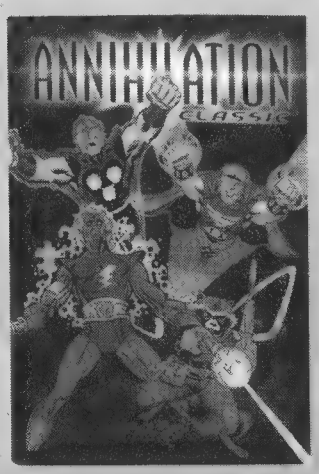
A **Poor** copy is damaged and generally unsuitable for collecting.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 0.5 grade.**

While the copy may still contain some readable stories, major defects get in the way.

Copies may be in the process of disintegrating and may do so with even light handling.



Annihilation Classic
Marvel

$29.99, color, 282 pgs.
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★

Marvel reintroduced and retooled many cosmic characters in its *Annihilation* saga. To cash in on that, it reprints several of those characters' early tales. The best story is of Bug, in which the Micronaut witnesses the origin of every Marvel superhero. (It would have been nice, had Jim Starlin's *Warlock* and *Thanos* tales been reprinted, since he's the master of cosmic opera.)

The first appearance of Nova is also reprinted, as is the premiere issue of *Quasar*. The latter was supposed to be Mark Gruenwald and Paul Ryan doing Marvel's version of Green Lantern, but Ryan left the book after #6.

Who would have dreamed that *Rocket Raccoon* (who's in the new *Guardians of the Galaxy* series) by Bill Mantlo and Mike Mignola would be reprinted? It's a cute "tail," but whether it should have been reprinted is debatable; it can probably be found in quarter bins. Marvel should have reprinted it in a Mantlo Visionaries book. Ditto with Starlin's characters. Or it could have been given Essentials treatment. All in all, it's not a *bad* book; it's just not worth $30.

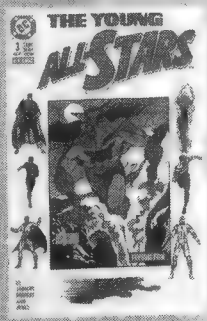
Reprints *Bug* #1, *Tales to Astonish* #13, *Nova* (Vol. 1) #1, *Quasar* #1, *Rocket Raccoon* #1-4, *Marvel Spotlight* #6, *Logan's Run* #6, and *Marvel Premiere* #1.

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-0785133889

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Alpha Flight CONTINUED	
47	4
➥1st Jim Lee at Marvel	
48-53	2
54	3
55-56	2
57-74	1
75-105	2
106	3
➥Northstar outed	
107-130	2
Ann 1	4
Ann 2	1
Special 1	3
Amazing Adult Fantasy MARVEL, 1961	
7	600
8	475
9-13	425
14	525
Amazing Adventures MARVEL, 1970	
1	30
2-3	20
4-5	14
6	20
7	14
8	22
9-10	20
11	150
➥1st blue Beast	
12-13	30
14	25
15-17	20
18	14
19-25	5
26-28	4
29	5
30-36	3
36/30¢	20
37-37/30¢	8
38-39	3
Amazing Fantasy MARVEL, 1962	
15	32000
➥1st Spider-Man	
16-18	5
Amazing Fantasy MARVEL, 2004	
1	4
2-14	3
15	4
16-20	3
Amazing Spider-Girl MARVEL, 2006	
0	2
1-3	3
Amazing Spider-Man MARVEL, 1963	
-1	3
1	27000
➥1st Chameleon	
1/Golden	200
2	3400
➥1st Vulture	
3	4600
➥1st Dr. Octopus	
4	2300
➥1st Sandman	
5	2500
➥Dr. Doom app.	
6	1650
➥1st Lizard	
7	1100
8	800
9	1025
➥1st Electro	
10	990
11	1900
12	825
13	1200
➥1st Mysterio	
14	2050
➥1st Green Goblin	
15	1800
➥1st Kraven	
16-17	800
➥2nd Green Goblin	
18	510
➥1st Ned Leeds	
19	460
20-21	510
22	425
23	510
24-25	500
26	550
27	500
28	450
29-30	240
31	325
32	175
33	140
34	240
35-36	225
37	250
38	195
39	350
➥1st Romita Spidey	
40	375
➥Goblin origin	
41	300
➥1st Rhino	
42	185
➥1st view of MJ	
43	120
44	175
45	115
46	250
➥1st Shocker	
47	105
48	120
49	125
50	625
➥Spidey quits	
51	200
52	150
53	105
54-55	110
56	90
57	80
58	100
59	70
60	105
61	72
62	75
63	160
➥vs. both Vultures	
64	60
65	55
66	80
➥1st Randy	
67-68	60
69	75
70-71	70
72	85
73	50
74	80
75-77	65
78	70
79-80	60
81	55
82-83	50
84-85	55
86	60
87	75
88	60
89	70
90	75
91	50
92	62
93	80
94	65
95	52
96	85
97	72
98	80
99	60
100	100
101	130
102	105
➥Morbius origin	
103	50
104	90
105	25
106	40
107-108	27
109-110	30
111	34
112	30
113	35
114	50
115	33
116	22
117	25
118	22
119-120	50
121-122	150
123	35
124	42
125	30
126	18
127	25
128	20
129	225
➥1st Punisher	
129/Ace	6
130	20
131	25
➥Uncle Doc Ock	
132	22
133	16
134	28
➥2nd Punisher	
135	45
136	60
➥Harry as Goblin II	
137	25
138	15
139	19
140	17
141	15
142	18
143	15
144	17
145-146	15
147	14
148	25
149	27
➥Spider-clone dies	
150	16
151	24
152	11
153-154	10
155	12
155/30¢	20
156	12
156/30¢	20
157	12
157/30¢	40
158	10
158/30¢	20
159	11
➥vs. Doc Ock	
159/30¢	20
160	9
161	12
162	11
163	10
164	12
165-166	9
167-168	7
169	10
➥1st black costume	
169/35¢	15
170	7
170/35¢	15
171	7
171/35¢	15
172	8
172/35¢	15
173	18
173/35¢	25
174-175	10
176-177	12
➥1st Hamilton Goblin	
178-180	11
181	9
182	8
183	7
184	8
185	7
186-187	8
188	7
189	6
190	7
191-193	6
194	21
➥1st Black Cat	
195	10
196-198	6
199	7
200	10
201	9
202	7
203	6
204	8
205-206	6
207	5
208-211	6
212-218	5
219-220	6
221-222	4
223	5
224-225	4
226	7
227	6
228	4
229	11
230-232	6
233	4
234	6
235	4
236-237	5
238	22
➥1st Hobgoblin	
239	10
240	5
241	4
242	5
243	6
244-245	5
246-248	4
249	5
250-251	6
252	10
➥1st black costume	
253-254	5
255-258	4
259-263	5
264-265	4
266-267	3
268-270	4
271	5
272-273	4
274-276	5
277-279	4
280-284	5
285	6
286	4
287	5
288-289	6
290-293	5
294-295	6
296	5
297	6
298	16
➥McFarlane starts	
299	9
➥Venom cameo	
300	35
➥1st Venom	
301	6
302	4
303	5
304-307	4
308	5
309	4
310-313	5
314	4
315-316	5
317-318	6
319	5
320	3
321	4
322	5
323	3
324	5
325-327	4
328	5
329	4
330-343	3
344	4
➥1st Cletus Kassidy	
345-347	3
348-353	2
354	3
355-357	2
358	6
359	2
360	3
361	6
➥1st Carnage	
362	25
➥2nd Carnage	
363	4
364	3
365	4
366-369	2
370	3
371-373	2
374	3
375	5
376	4
377	3
378	4
379	5
380	3
381	4
382-388	3
388/Variant	2
389-394	3
394/Variant	4
395-399	3
400	5
400/Overlay	30
401-432	2
432/Variant	5
433-441	2
500	5
501	4
502	3
503-509	2
509/DirCut	7
➥Director's Cut	
510	4
511	3
512	5
513	3
514-520	2
521-528	3
529	20
529/2nd	6
529/3rd	5
530	8
531-532	6
533-536	4
537	3
538	6
539	10
540-541	5
542-544	3
545	4
546	6
547-560	3
Aim Giveaway 1	4
Aim Giveaway 2	2
Ann 1	700
➥1st Sinister Six	
Ann 2	550
Ann 3	140
Ann 4	90

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #3 ★★★★



"A Call to Arms"

Following a battle with Axis Amerika, the new, young heroes are inducted into The All-Star Squadron on a trial basis.

The action never lets up in the first half of the issue with a clever writing trick of multiple simultaneous events taking place.

While it may seem clichéd to some, having President Roosevelt suggest a try-out and a bond tour for the young heroes is a nice touch. After all, he was responsible for the formation of both The Justice Society of America and The All-Star Squadron. Now to learn the origins of these new characters.

DC • Aug 1987 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray, Howard Simpson
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Murray

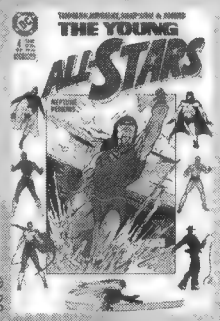
© DC

No CBG copies

Then $1 NOW $1

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #4 ★★★½



"California, Here We Come ..."

The Young All-Stars' first bond rally at The Hollywood Bowl is marred by anti-Japanese sentiments.

Capsule origins for all of the new All-Stars, with the exception of "Iron" Munro, are given in this issue, which also continues Roy and Dann Thomas' exploration of the treatment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Again, the Thomases deftly show how they can tie in real historical data with comics history and make it all one cohesive package.

This six-part introduction is also memorable for Brian Murray's outstanding covers, spotlighting The Young All-Stars and the older heroes.

DC • Sep 1987 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy Dann Thomas
Pencils and Inks: Brian Murray, Howard Simpson, Malcolm Jones III, Danny Bulanadi
Cover: Murray

© DC

Price guide for CBG copies
Then $1 NOW $1

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Ann 5	75
Ann 6-7	35
Ann 8-9	22
Ann 10-12	8
Ann 13	7
Ann 14	6
Ann 15	7
Ann 16	5
Ann 17-21	4
➥Spidey marries	
Ann 22	5
Ann 23-25	3
Ann 26	4
Ann 27-28	3
Ann 1996	4
Ann 1997	3
Ashcan 1	1

Amazing Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1999

1	7
1/DF Romita	12
1/DF Lee	35
1/Authentix	8
1/Sunburst	18
2/Both	3
3-11	2
12	3
13-17	2
18-19	3
20	5
21-24	2
25	3
25/Speckle	4
26-29	2
30	5
➥Straczynski starts	
31	3
32-33	4
34	5
35	4
36	9
➥9/11 issue	
37-39	3
40	2
41	4
42-43	3
44-49	2
50	6
51-56	2
57-58	3
Ann '99-'00	4
Ann 2001	3

America's Best Comics
NEDOR, 1942

1	1600
2	850
3	600
4-6	440
7	575
8-10	400
11-20	360
21-24	325
25-31	265

America's Best TV Comics
ABC TV, 1967

1	95

America's Greatest Comics
FAWCETT, 1941

1	1900
2	900
3	675
4-5	500
6-8	450

Angel and the Ape
DC, 1968

1	40
2	20
3-7	15

Animal Comics
DELL, 1942

1	900
2	450
3	340
4	150
5	300
6-7	135
➥War bonds cover	
8-10	225
11-15	170
16-20	130
21-25	105
26-30	80

Animal Man
DC, 1988

1	4
2	3
3-49	2
50	3
51-89	2
Ann 1	4

Ant
ARCANA, 2004

1	10
1/Red foil	35
2-3	5
3/Variant	6

Ant
IMAGE, 2005

1	5
1/Sketch	3
1/RRP	20
1/Conv	15
2-8	3

Anthro
DC, 1968

1	50
2-6	20

Aquaman
DC, 1962

1	900
2	275
3-5	150
6-10	90
11	125
➥1st Mera	
12-17	75
18	90
➥Weds Mera	
19-28	60
29	75
➥1st Ocean Master	
30	50
31	45
32	50
33-34	45
35-41	40
42-43	30
44-46	25
47	40
48-49	25
50	75
51	50
52	40
53-58	20
59-63	10

Archer & Armstrong
VALIANT, 1992

0	4
0/Gold	25
1	4
2	3
3-7	2
8	3
9	2
10-21	1
22	2
23-25	1
26	5

Archie
ARCHIE, 1942

1	12200
2	3325
3	2175
4	1100
5	1000
6	740
7-9	660
10	585
11-15	475
16-20	400
21-24	325
25-30	275
31-35	220
36-40	175
41-50	125
51-60	110
61-70	70
71-80	56
81-90	44
91-99	34
100	55
101-120	22
121-140	16
141-150	13
151-180	9
181-200	5
201-250	3
251-571	2
Ann 1	1350
Ann 2	660
Ann 3	475
Ann 4	345
Ann 5	285
Ann 6	180
Ann 7	160
Ann 8	135
Ann 9	120
Ann 10	110
Ann 11	70
Ann 12	60
Ann 13	58
Ann 14-15	50
Ann 16-17	26
Ann 18-19	22
Ann 20	14
Ann 21-22	9
Ann 23-26	8

Army of Darkness
DARK HORSE, 1992

1	12
2-3	9

Arrgh!
MARVEL, 1974

1	15
2	4
3-5	3

Astonishing Tales
MARVEL, 1970

1	40
2-5	20
6	12
7-8	15
9	10
10	20
11	10
12	30
➥Man-Thing story	
13-20	10
21	25
22	10
23	15
24	10
25	25
➥1st Deathlok	
26	10
27-29	7
30-32	5
33	10
34	6
35	7
➥Low distribution	
35/30¢	20
➥Low distribution	
36-36/30¢	10

Astonishing X-Men
MARVEL, 1995

1-3	6
4	8

Astonishing X-Men
MARVEL, 1999

1	5
2-3	3

Astonishing X-Men
MARVEL, 2004

1	8
➥Whedon starts	
1/Cassaday-1/DirCut	45
1/Dynamic	8
2	16
3	4
4	8
4/Variant	25
➥Colossus cover	
5	8
6	5
7	4
8-10	3
10/Variant	5
11-19	3

Astro Boy
GOLD KEY, 1965

1	265

Astro City
IMAGE, 1995

1	5
2-6	3

Astro City
IMAGE, 1996

1	4
1/3D	5
2-22	3

Atom
DC, 1962

1	750
2	300
3	225
4-5	175
6	125
7	250
➥Hawkman app.	
8	125
9	90
10-13	85
14	95
➥Hawkman app.	
15	85
16-17	45
18	50
19	45
20	60
21-23	35
24	40
25	50
26-28	35

The Basics

Encasing comic books in plastic? Sounds crazy!

But it isn't as crazy as it sounds...

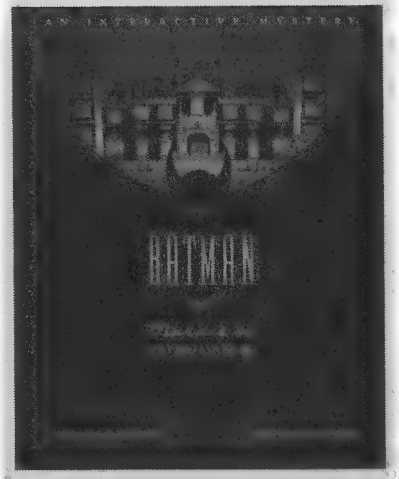
Judging the condition of an older comic book is one of the most challenging parts of collecting. When a minor difference in grade equates to thousands of dollars, everyone needs to agree.

In the past, a lot of people outside the hobby who **might** have been interested in investing in comics avoided them for this reason. You just can't get a college degree in comic-book grading!

With the advent of third-party grading services, anyone can buy and sell investment-grade comic books, regardless of their background.

Art: Chuck Fiala

That's had some interesting effects. Sales of comic books online have skyrocketed. And people have been willing to pay more for "slabbed" versions of many (but **not** all!) comics, because the grade makes it easier to resell.



Batman: Murder at Wayne Manor

Quirk Books

$24.95, color, 72 pgs.

Writer: Duane Swierczynski

Artist: David Lapham

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

Batman stumbles into a cold case in which his late father, Dr. Thomas Wayne, is implicated in a murder. Refusing to believe it, Bats sets out to find the true killer. He goes over his father's private journals, old police reports, news clippings, photos, and Wayne Manor blueprints — all of which are included as removable facsimiles.

As the reader approaches the end, the last third of the book is sealed. In order to read on, the reader must break the seal to find out whether Dr. Wayne was, indeed, the killer or whether the late philanthropist was framed.

This is a creative take on the removable-items-book concept. Duane Swierczynski outdoes himself on the story — accessible for young adults and adults — and David Lapham's art is an excellent complement.

www.quirkbooks.com
www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 978-1594742378

UNSLABBED Near Mint

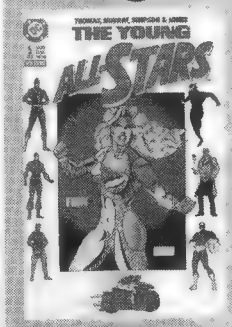
Atom CONTINUED
29. 100
30. 55
31. 48
32. 35
33. 40
34-35. 35
36-37. 45
38. 30
Special 1-2. . . . 3

Atom and Hawkman DC, 1968
39-41. 30
42. 35
43-45. 30

Authority DC, 1999
1. 5
2-3. 4
4-29. 3
Ann 2000. 4

Avengers MARVEL, 1963
0. 3
1. 4200
➥1st Avengers
1.5. 3
2. 935
3. 750
4. 1450
➥Cap. America joins
4/Golden 40
5. 350
6. 390
7. 460
8. 275
9. 225
➥1st Wonder Man
10. 180
➥1st Hercules
11. 275
➥Spider-Man app.
12. 115
13-14. 150
15. 100
16. 125
17. 115
18. 100
19. 150
20. 80
21-22. 70
23. 75
24. 70
25. 95
26. 65
27. 70
28-30. 50
31. 43
32. 37
33. 50
34. 55
35. 50
36. 35
37. 40
38. 43
39-41. 40
42. 50
43. 45
44. 40
45. 50
46. 30
47-48. 37
49. 32
50. 30
51. 40
52. 41
53. 60
➥X-Men app.
54-55. 30
56. 50
57. 110
➥1st Vision
58. 65
59-60. 40
61-66. 30
67. 45
68. 27
69-70. 30
71. 50
➥1st Invaders
72-73. 30
74-76. 25
77. 20
78. 25
79-81. 23
82. 26
83. 36
➥1st Valkyrie
84. 23
85-86. 25
87. 40
88. 25
89. 20
90-91. 22
92. 26
93. 120
➥Double-size
94. 35
95. 38
96. 35
97-98. 26
99. 30
100. 55
➥Knight gets sword
101. 18
102. 16
103. 40
➥Sentinels
104. 20
105. 18
106. 17
107. 20
108. 12
109. 18
110. 25
111. 22
112. 25
113. 11
114. 15
115. 13
116. 27
➥Defenders War
117. 20
118. 24
119. 15
120. 14
121. 10
122. 13
123. 9
124. 12
125. 20
126. 18
127-129. 12
130. 15
131. 12
132. 10
133. 8
134-135. 10
136-137. 8
138-140. 7
141. 10
142-145. 8
146. 10
146/30¢. 18
147. 7
147/30¢. 15
148. 12
148/30¢. 18
149. 6
149/30¢. 15
150. 7
150/30¢. 15
151. 7
152-155. 6
156. 9
157. 6
158-159. 8
160. 6
160/35¢. 15
161. 7
161/35¢. 15
162. 8
162/35¢. 15
163. 7
163/35¢-164/35¢ 15
165-166. 6
167. 5
168. 7
169-170. 4

RETROVIEW
Young All-Stars #5 ★★★



"Hollywood Knights (1942 Model)"

Axis Amerika attacks and captures "Iron" Munro, Flying Fox, and Fury.

More of 1942's styles and activities are spotlighted in the early pages of this issue. These include a dance at The Hollywood Canteen, Munro and Fox's encounter with a zoot suiter and an Army recruiter, and a visit to the Santa Monica Pier with a pair of teen girls.

Roy and Dann Thomas are laying the groundwork for a romance between Munro and Fury, and it's proceeding at the right pace. Other events, however, are beginning to drag. Axis Amerika seems as if it should be a competent group of villains, but it can't seem to get the job done.

DC • Oct 87 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Howard Simpson, Brian Murray
Inks: Various
Cover: Murray

No CGC copies

Then $1 NOW $1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

171. 6
172-174. 4
175. 5
176-180. 4
181. 5
182. 4
183-184. 6
185. 7
186. 5
187-189. 6
190. 4
191-195. 5
196. 7
197-199. 5
200. 9
➥Double-size
201-218. 3
219-224. 2
225. 3
226-249. 2
250. 3
251-262. 2
263. 3
264-349. 2
350. 3
351-359. 1
360. 3
361-362. 1
363. 3
364-365. 1
366. 4
➥Foil cover
367-368. 1
369. 3
370-374. 1
375. 2
375/Collector's. 3
376-379. 2
379/Double . . . 3
380. 2
380/Double . . . 3
381. 2
381/Double . . . 3
382. 2
382/Double . . . 3
383-399. 2
400. 4
401-402. 3
Ann 1. 125
Ann 2. 120
Ann 3-4. 22
Ann 5. 25
Ann 6. 7
Ann 7. 12
Ann 8-9. 8
Ann 10. 9
Ann 11-16. . . . 4
Ann 17-23. . . . 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Avengers West Coast MARVEL, 1989
47-55. 1
56. 8
➥Psycho Scarlet Witch
57-74. 1
75. 2
76-102. 1
Ann 4-7. 2
Ann 8. 3

Badger CAPITAL, 1983
1. 5
2-5. 3
6-49. 2
50. 4
51. 2
52-54. 3
55-70. 2

Banana Splits GOLD KEY, 1969
1. 30
2. 18
3-5. 14
6-8. 12

Barbarians ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975
1. 8

Barbie and Ken DELL, 1962
1. 200
2-4. 150
5. 165

Bat Lash DC, 1968
1. 25
2-7. 15

Batman DC, 1940
0. 3
1. 80000
➥1st Catwoman
2. 15000
3. 9750
4. 7500
5. 5500
➥1st Batmobile
6-7. 4500
8. 4000
9. 3750
10. 7500
11. 4750
12. 2900

UNSLABBED Near Mint

➥1st Batcave
13-14. 2775
15. 2625
16. 4600
➥1st Alfred
17-20. 1650
21-22. 1275
23. 2000
24. 1275
25. 2050
26-30. 1275
31-36. 950
37. 1200
38. 1000
39. 950
40. 1140
41-43. 760
44. 1080
45-46. 760
47. 3000
➥Batman origin
48. 965
49. 1350
➥1st Mad Hatter
50-51. 690
52. 850
53-54. 690
55. 850
56-57. 690
58. 750
59-61. 690
62. 1250
➥Catwoman origin
63. 575
64. 515
65. 575
66. 660
➥vs. Joker
67-68. 515
69. 575
70-72. 515
73. 660
74. 550
75-77. 500
78. 585
79-80. 500
81. 485
82-83. 435
84. 485
85-90. 435
91-99. 400
100. 2000
➥Anniversary issue
101-104. . . . 400
105. 490
106-109. . . . 400
110. 425
111-120. . . . 290
121. 375
➥1st Mr. Freeze
122. 225
123. 220

UNSLABBED Near Mint

124-126. . . . 195
127. 240
➥vs. Joker
128. 195
129. 250
➥Robin origin
130. 195
131. 145
132-135. . . . 130
136. 215
➥vs. Joker
137-145. . . . 140
146-147. . . . 110
148. 140
➥vs. Joker
149-150. . . . 110
151. 90
152. 100
153. 125
154. 85
155. 300
➥1st SA Penguin
156-164. . . . 85
165. 130
166-168. . . . 85
169. 90
170. 85
171. 450
➥1st SA Riddler
172. 125
173-175. . . . 75
176. 85
177. 75
178. 85
179. 120
➥vs. Riddler
180. 60
181. 175
➥1st Poison Ivy
182-185. . . . 60
186. 70
187. 65
188. 40
189. 250
➥1st SA Scarecrow
190. 45
191. 40
192. 60
193. 70
194. 80
195-196. . . . 40
197. 100
➥Catwoman app.
198. 85
199. 40
200. 100
➥Robin origin
201-202. . . . 35
203-204. . . . 30
205. 40
206. 30
207-208. . . . 50

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #6

★★★

"The War Within!"

Dan the Dyna-Mite discovers that his powers still work in a final showdown with Axis Amerika.

It took six issues to complete (about two issues too long), but this introduction of The Young All-Stars wraps up with a bang, literally, as Axis Amerika's zeppelin explodes.

The final battle gives a few more clues to the origins of both "Iron" Munro and Ubermensch, as well as showing what happens when Fury gets really angry. (You don't want to make her that angry.)

Roy and Dann Thomas fall back on a tried-and-true concept by having The All-Stars participate in a baseball game on the final page.

DC • Nov 1987 • 26 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray, Howard Simpson
Inks: Various
Cover: Murray

Near CGC copy: **9.6** Then $1 NOW $1

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
209-212	30
213	45
214-217	30
218	70
➥Giant-size	
219	50
220-221	30
222	75
223	40
224-226	30
227	50
228	40
229-231	30
232	350
➥1st Ra's al Ghul	
233	30
234	115
➥1st SA Two-Face	
235	17
236	25
237	75
➥1st Reaper	
238	65
➥100 pages	
239-240	17
241	30
242	17
243	70
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
244	65
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
245	70
246-247	15
248	20
249-250	15
251	60
➥vs. Joker	
252	14
253	26
254-255	32
256-258	35
259-261	32
262-263	15
264-266	9
267-285	8
286	12
➥vs. Joker	
287-290	9
291	12
292-294	9
295-299	8
300	15
301-331	7
332	8
333-352	7
353	5
354-356	7
357	9
358-367	7
368	8
369-370	6
371-399	5
400	10
401-403	4
404	5
405	6
406-408	5
409-416	3
417	5
418-420	4
421-425	3
426-427	6
427/Direct	4
428	6
429	4
430	3
431-435	2
436	3
437-441	2
442	3
443-456	2
457	3
457/Direct	4
458-486	2
487	1
488-492	3
492/Silver	5
493	3
494-496	2
497	3
498-500	2
500/CS	4
501-515	2
515/Variant	4
516-530	2
530/Variant	3
531	2
531/Variant	3
532	2
532/Variant	3
533-535	2
535/Variant	4
536-549	2
550	3
550/Variant	4
551-562	2
563-564	3
565-599	2
600	4
601-607	2
608	5
➥Jim Lee begins	
609	4
610-619/2nd	3
620-629	2
630	3
631-632	2
633	3
634	6
635	15
➥Red Hood	
636-637	12
638	11
638/2nd	6
639	16
640-641	6
642-650	3
651	6
652-671	3
1000000	4
Ann 1	540
Ann 2	275
Ann 3	215
Ann 4-5	110
Ann 6-7	85
Ann 8	7
Ann 9-11	6
Ann 12-13	5
Ann 14-15	3
Ann 15/Silver	4
Ann 16-18	3
Ann 19-21	4
Ann 22-23	3
Ann 24	4
Ann 25	12
GS 1-2	5
GS 3	6

Batman Adventures: Mad Love
DC, 1994

1	8

Batman and the Outsiders
DC, 1983

1	3
2-32	2
Ann 1	3
Ann 2	2

Batman Family
DC, 1975

1	16
2	10
3-6	8
7-8	6
9-12	7
13-16	5
17-19	7
20	8

Batman: Gotham Knights
DC, 2000

1	4
2-54	3
55	4
56-74	3

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight
DC, 1989

1-15	3
16	4
17-20	3
21-26	2
27	3
28-49	2
50	4
51-64	2
0	3
65-99	2
100	5
101-119	2
120	4
121-157	2
158-198	3
200	5
201-213	3
Ann 1	5
Ann 2-5	4
Ann 6	3
Ann 7	4
Special 1	7

Batman: Sword of Azrael
DC, 1992

1	4
1/Silver	2
2	3
2/Silver	2
3	3
3/Silver	2
4	3
4/Silver	2

Batman: The Dark Knight
DC, 1986
➥Frank Miller series

1	25
2	9
3	6
4	5

Batman: The Killing Joke
DC, 1988

1	7
➥Alan Moore, Brian Bolland	

I've Been Slabbed!

The G.I. Joe movie is set to be released this August, and fans have been going crazy picking up back issues (both graded and ungraded) of the original Marvel series from the '80s and '90s. Almost every issue is selling well in 9.4+ condition, and I think this title represents the hottest part of the modern back-issue market right now.

An unslabbed NM/NM+ copy of *G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero* #96 (Jan 90) sold for $127.50 on eBay in January. (This is an issue that is listed in the price guides for $5 in NM-.) A CGC 9.8 copy sold in June for $405. *G.I. Joe* #150-155 (Jul-Dec 94) are supposed to be in the highest demand, since they are the last six issues in the regular series and had the lowest print run. In CGC 9.8, #150 last sold for $300 in July. A copy of #151 in CGC 9.6 last sold for $94 in May, and the only existing 9.8 of that issue has not changed hands, according to my source. A copy of #152 in CGC 9.6 last sold for $49 in October, and the two existing 9.8s of that issue have not changed hands. I think collectors willing to spend the big money are waiting on the sidelines until one of those comes up for auction. A CGC 9.8 copy of #153 sold for $126 in December; a copy of #154 in CGC 9.8 sold for $400 in October; prior to that a copy sold in July for $800. There are three existing copies in 9.8 for #154. And #155 last sold for $504 in November, with a copy selling in July for $718.

Here are this month's picks:

***Watchmen* issues.** All issues (Sep 86-Oct 87) are still selling well in CGC 9.8, although #1, #4, #8, and #9 garner the highest prices. *Watchmen* #8 and #9 sell for about the same price as #1 in 9.8, which is around $350 to $400.

***Batman* #366.** This is the first appearance of Jason Todd in the Robin costume and the book (Dec 83) has a nice Joker cover. It has been selling in the $150 to $175 range in 9.8. Eleven copies exist in this condition.

***Uncanny X-Men* #157.** This book (May 82) recently sold for $1,177 in CGC 9.9. These 1980s comics are tough to find in 9.9+, and the demand for them is huge.

***Action Comics* #869 error.** The cover of this issue shows Clark Kent and his dad having a couple of beers together, but DC recalled the issue, and the new covers changed the labels of the bottles to say "Soda Pop," instead. It's not known how many of the error books were destroyed. They sell on eBay between $10 and $20 ungraded, with graded copies selling for around $70 to $115.

***League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* #5 error.** This is another error issue (Jun 00) that has picked up steam in the secondary market. DC scrapped the entire print run, and only 100 to 200 copies are known to exist. Some say that this might be the rarest modern comic in existence. At the beginning of 2008, two copies sold for $475 each. In October 2008, one sold for $700 and another for $1,470. Most recently, in December, one copy sold for $1,500!

***Amazing Spider-Man* #566-569.** Recent issues of *Amazing Spider-Man* have been selling for good prices — #566 for $44.50, #567 for $44.50, #568 for $41.50, and #569 for $68.99 (first appearance of Anti-Venom). I've noticed that current issues sell better than back issues. Some dealers who live in close proximity to CGC can drop off and pick up their books and post them to eBay quickly. The first buyers pay a premium to be the first ones to own the books, but some of the copies may not be posted again for auction for several months.

***Black Lightning Year One* #1.** DC sent out an e-mail to all retailers saying that, since many of the copies of this issue arrived damaged, DC plans to replace the entire print run. The new print run will have a colored yellow logo. (They forgot to mention whether it would be the DC logo or the masthead that will change — no matter, because none of the current logos are yellow.) This first print run may prove to be worth grading, if too few copies are found to be worthy of a 9.8.

***Batman* #428.** I was shocked to see a copy of *Batman* #428 (Jan 89) sell for $550 in December 2008. It was 1 of 13 known copies to exist in 9.8. This is the issue where Jason Todd dies. It's a popular submission with a total of 328 copies being graded. The gap between 9.8 and 9.6 is huge — 9.6s sell for around $50. The highest price paid for this book in 9.8 was $966 back in January 2008.

*Steve Mortensen owns Colossus Comics (**www.colossuscomics.com**) and **Micurio.com**, a free online community for sharing all your collectibles. He can be reached at **steve@colossuscomics.com**.*

The Death of the New Gods

DC

$29.99, color, 256 pgs.
Writer: Jim Starlin
Artists: Starlin, Matt Banning
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½

According to Jim Starlin, Grant Morrison plans to revamp The New Gods radically and DC wanted Starlin to kill off the Jack Kirby versions of the characters. A powerful entity is murdering The New Gods. Mr. Miracle, Orion, and Superman investigate. Superman learns his powers pale in comparison to the forces at work but gets a few good shots in when fighting Orion, Darkseid (Jack Kirby's greatest villain next to Doctor Doom), Mantis, and Kalibak. Superman — who was in Kirby's first *New Gods* story — is appropriately enough in the final *New Gods* story; he has the perspective of an outsider looking in.

Kirby never had a chance to finish his *New Gods* opus. That said, DC couldn't have passed the torch to a better man than Starlin, the grand master of space opera, who has sent characters to their deaths with dignity. (Captain Marvel, anyone?) What's more is that this book has an "old school" feel to it, given Starlin's stunning art. Starlin hasn't lost his touch, not at all. It's a good send-off for classic characters.

Reprints *The Death of The New Gods* #1-8

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 1401218393

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Batman: The Long Halloween
DC, 1996
1 . . . 9
2 . . . 7
3 . . . 6
4-6 . . . 5
7-12 . . . 4
13 . . . 6

Batman/The Spirit
DC, 2007
1 . . . 5

Battle Chasers
IMAGE, 1998
1-1/Wraparound 5
1/Holochrome 17
1/Gold . . . 14
2 . . . 4
2/Dynamic . . . 5
2/B . . . 6
3 . . . 4
4/A-8 . . . 3
9 . . . 4
Ashcan 1 . . . 5
Ashcan 1/Gold . 7

Battle Classics
DC, 1978
1 . . . 4

Battle of the Planets
GOLD KEY, 1979
1 . . . 20
2 . . . 15
3-6 . . . 12
7 . . . 30
8-10 . . . 20

Battlestar Galactica
MARVEL, 1979
1 . . . 4
4-10 . . . 3
11-23 . . . 2

Beatles
DELL, 1964
1 . . . 440

Beowulf
DC, 1975
1 . . . 5
2 . . . 3
3-6 . . . 2

Beware
TROJAN, 1953
13 (1) . . . 400
14 (2) . . . 250
15 (3)-16 (4) 200
5-13 . . . 175
14-15 . . . 150

Beware
MARVEL, 1973
1 . . . 8
2-8 . . . 5

Beware the Creeper
DC, 1968
1 . . . 45
2-5 . . . 32
6 . . . 55

Beyond Avalon
IMAGE, 2005
1 . . . 3
2-3 . . . 4

Beyond the Grave
CHARLTON, 1975
1 . . . 7
2-3 . . . 4
4-17 . . . 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Big All-American Comic Book
DC, 1944
1 . . . 6500

Bigfoot
IDEA & DESIGN WORKS, 2005
1-4 . . . 4

Big Shot
COLUMBIA, 1940
1 . . . 1000
2 . . . 475
3 . . . 385
4-5 . . . 335
6-10 . . . 275
11-13 . . . 225
14 . . . 300
15 . . . 340
16-20 . . . 160
21-27 . . . 135
28 . . . 185
29-30 . . . 135
31-40 . . . 110
41-49 . . . 95
50-60 . . . 85
61-70 . . . 65
71-80 . . . 55
81-104 . . . 48

Bionic Woman
CHARLTON, 1977
1 . . . 14
2-5 . . . 6

Birds of Prey
DC, 1999
1 . . . 4
2-7 . . . 3
8 . . . 12
➥Nightwing app.
9-75 . . . 3
76 . . . 15
➥1st Black Alice
77-99 . . . 3
100 . . . 4
101 . . . 3

Bizarre Adventures
MARVEL, 1981
25-26 . . . 3
27 . . . 4
28 . . . 5
29-34 . . . 3

Black Cat Comics
HARVEY, 1946
1 . . . 450
2 . . . 275
3-5 . . . 220
6-8 . . . 175
9 . . . 225
10-20 . . . 135
21-29 . . . 100
30 . . . 150
31 . . . 130
32-42 . . . 125
43 . . . 75
44-50 . . . 125
51 . . . 165
52-62 . . . 54
63 . . . 80
64-65 . . . 75

Black Goliath
MARVEL, 1976
1 . . . 11
2 . . . 5
2/30¢ . . . 20
3 . . . 4
3/30¢ . . . 20
4 . . . 4
4/30¢ . . . 20
5 . . . 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Blackhawk
DC, 1944
9 . . . 2600
10 . . . 1100
11 . . . 900
12-15 . . . 800
16-20 . . . 525
21-25 . . . 460
26-30 . . . 400
31-35 . . . 350
36-40 . . . 300
41-49 . . . 225
50 . . . 200
51-60 . . . 165
61-70 . . . 145
71 . . . 200
➥Blackhawk origin
72-80 . . . 130
81-86 . . . 125
87-92 . . . 120
93 . . . 135
94-99 . . . 110
100 . . . 140
101-107 . . . 105
108 . . . 325
➥1st DC issue
109 . . . 130
110-117 . . . 110
118 . . . 135
119-130 . . . 85
131-140 . . . 65
141-149 . . . 50
150-163 . . . 48
164 . . . 60
165-166 . . . 48
167-180 . . . 22
181-200 . . . 16
201-227 . . . 15
228 . . . 30
229-243 . . . 15
244-260 . . . 4
261-273 . . . 3

Black Lightning
DC, 1977
1 . . . 10
2-11 . . . 5

Black Lightning
DC, 1995
1 . . . 3
2-5 . . . 2
6 . . . 3
7-13 . . . 2

Black Magic
DC, 1973
1 . . . 15
2-9 . . . 7

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Black Orchid
DC, 1993
1 . . . 3
1/Platinum . . . 5
2-22 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 4

Black Orchid
DC, 1988
1 . . . 6
➥1st U.S. Gaiman
2-3 . . . 5

Black Panther
MARVEL, 1977
1 . . . 12
2 . . . 7
3-5 . . . 5
5/35¢ . . . 15
6-10 . . . 5
11-15 . . . 4

Black Panther
MARVEL, 1998
1 . . . 5
1/Variant . . . 7
2/A-2/B . . . 4
3-62 . . . 3

Black Panther
MARVEL, 2005
1 . . . 6
1/2nd . . . 4
1/Ribic . . . 20
2-17 . . . 3
18 . . . 4
19-20 . . . 3
21 . . . 14
22 . . . 6
23 . . . 5

Blazing Combat
WARREN, 1965
1 . . . 90
2-3 . . . 30
4 . . . 40
Ann 1 . . . 45

Blazing Comics
ENWIL, 1944
1 . . . 300
2-5 . . . 150

Blitzkrieg
DC, 1976
1 . . . 16
2 . . . 8

UNSLABBED Near Mint

3-5 . . . 6

Bloodshot
VALIANT, 1993
0/VVSS . . . 25
0/PlatError . . 750
0 . . . 3
0/Gold . . . 25
1 . . . 2
2-6 . . . 1
6/VVSS . . . 50
7-15 . . . 1
16 . . . 2
17-24 . . . 1
25-37 . . . 2
38-43 . . . 3
44-47 . . . 4
48-49 . . . 5
50 . . . 6
51 . . . 10
YB 1 . . . 5

Blue Beetle
CHARLTON, 1964
1 . . . 45
2 . . . 30
3-5 . . . 20

Blue Beetle
CHARLTON, 1965
50-54 . . . 27
1 . . . 60
2 . . . 40
3-5 . . . 27

Blue Beetle
DC, 1986
1-24 . . . 1

Bomba The Jungle Boy
DC, 1967
1 . . . 16
2-7 . . . 8

Bone
CARTOON BOOKS, 1991
1 . . . 80
2 . . . 45
3 . . . 25
4 . . . 16
5 . . . 12
6-8 . . . 7
9-13.5/Gold . . . 4
14-55 . . . 3
Special 1 . . . 2

Books of Magic
DC, 1990
1-4 . . . 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Books of Magic
DC, 1994
1 . . . 3
1/Silver . . . 4
2-75 . . . 3
Ann 1-3 . . . 4

Booster Gold
DC, 2007
0 . . . 3
1 . . . 6
2-7 . . . 3

Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery
GOLD KEY, 1963
3 . . . 27
4-5 . . . 25
6-8 . . . 20
9 . . . 25
10 . . . 15
11 . . . 22
12 . . . 15
13-14 . . . 12
15 . . . 15
16-20 . . . 12
21 . . . 18
22-30 . . . 10
31-40 . . . 9
41-50 . . . 8
51-59 . . . 6
60-74 . . . 5
75-79 . . . 3
80-85 . . . 6
➥Giant issues; scarce
86-97 . . . 3

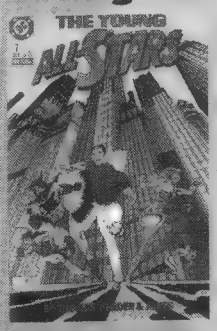
Boris Karloff Thriller
GOLD KEY, 1962
1 . . . 75
2 . . . 55

Born
MARVEL, 2003
1 . . . 5
2-4 . . . 4

Boy Comics
LEV GLEASON, 1942
3 . . . 1500
4 . . . 1100
5 . . . 575
6 . . . 950
➥Iron Jaw origin
7 . . . 620
8 . . . 515
9 . . . 450
10 . . . 615
11-14 . . . 350

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #7 ★★★½



"Somewhere in This Favored Land ..."

Following an exhibition baseball game between The All-Star Squadron and The Young All-Stars, the younger team is sent on a mission to stop a German pocket submarine.

Following the six-issue introductory arc, this is a good Done in One story, even if it does use portions of "Casey at the Bat," one of the most overquoted pieces of poetry ever, as part of the story.

Having the three foreign members of The Young All-Stars be unfamiliar with baseball is understandable, but having at least a couple of All-Star Squadron members similarly perplexed would have provided more of a balance.

DC • Dec 87 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Howard Bender
Inks: Malcolm Jones III, Bob Downs
Cover: Murray

© DC

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RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #8 ★★★

"Manhunters of the World, Unite ..."

After being duped by The Grandmaster, the two Golden Age Manhunters recruit The Young All-Stars to stop Green Lantern.

While part of the multi-issue *Millennium* crossovers, this issue barely ties into the overall event. Well, aside from the appearance of The Grandmaster and the two heroes known as Manhunter, one originally published by DC and the other by Quality.

How this 1942-based adventure fits into the overall *Millennium* story waits to be seen, but it's a good story in and of itself. The mysteries of the various Young All-Stars continue to be explored and expanded on, keeping readers intrigued.

DC
Jan 1988 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Murray

We sell copies **Then $1.25 NOW $1**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
15	400
16	225
17	250
18-20	200
21-25	140
26-29	130
30	200
➥Crimebuster origin	
31-40	58
41-50	42
51-62	30
63-80	27
81-100	24
101-119	22

Boy Commandos
DC, 1942

1	4500
2	1500
3	1000
4-6	500
7-10	275
11-22	190
23	220
24-30	150
31-35	135
36	195

Boy Commandos
DC, 1973

1	8
2	5

Brave and the Bold
DC, 1955

1	3000
2	1500
3	700
4-5	650
6-10	500
11-22	400
23	500
➥Vik. Prince origin	
24	350
25	500
➥1st Suicide Squad	
26	325
27	330
28	5000
➥1st JLA	
29	2000
30	1750
31	350
32-33	200
34	1750
➥1st SA Hawkman	
35-36	400
37	250
38-39	225
40-41	140
42	300
43	350
➥Hawkman origin	
44	260
45-49	60
50	175
51	225
52	125
53	75
54	350
➥1st Teen Titans	
55-56	45
57	150
➥1st Metamorpho	
58	65
59	80
60	100
➥1st Wonder Girl	
61	125
➥Starman origin	
62	100
➥1st SA Wildcat	
63	40
64	60
65-66	22
67	65
➥Batman starts	
68	80
➥Batman Hulk parody	
69-73	50
74	40
75	60
76	50
77-78	40
79	75
➥Batman, Deadman	
80-82	50
83	60
84	50
85	60
➥N. Adams GA	
86	50
87	26
88-90	20
91-92	18
93	30
94	18
95	24
96-98	15
99	22
100	30
101-102	15
103-110	12
111-114	18
115	22
116-118	18
119-126	7
127-128	6
129-130	11
131	6
132	4
133	5
134-140	4
141	10
142-179	4
180-190	3
191	8
192-196	3
197	4
198-199	3
200	7
Ann 1	6

Buffy the Vampire Slayer
DARK HORSE, 1998

0.5/All	7
1	5
1/A	10
1/B	5
1/Gold	10
2	4
2-3/Variants	5
4-20/Both	4
21-49/Both	3
50/Both	4
51-63	3
Ann 1999	6

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Season Eight
DARK HORSE, 2007

1/Both	15
2	6
3	4
4-11	3

Cable
MARVEL, 1993

-1	2
1	4
2-10	3
11-15	2
16/Both	3
17-24	2
25	4
26-49	2
50	3
51-74	2
75	5
76-99	2
100	4
101-107	2
Ann 1998	3
Ann 1999	4

Cadillacs & Dinosaurs
KITCHEN SINK, 1993

1	4

Caliber Christmas
CALIBER

1	4

Caliber Presents
CALIBER, 1989

1	15
➥1st Crow	
2-7	3
8	2
9-24	3

Captain Action
DC, 1968

1	45
2-4	35
5	20

Captain America
MARVEL, 1968

100	210
101	55
102-108	35
109	45
➥Origin retold	
110	75
➥Steranko begins	
111	65
112	50
113	60
➥Avengers app.	
114-116	30
117	95
➥1st Falcon	
118-124	25
125-127	20
128-130	15
131-132	18
133	15
134-136	18
137	35
138	30
139-146	25
147	18
148	16
149	15
150	25
151-153	15
154-155	25
156	20
157-162	10
163-164	12
165-167	10

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tierney, Collector's Edition

Throughout the latter part of 2008, these *Trendwatcher* reports were more about treading water, and the forecast for December was similarly gloomy. Added to global economic woes, December had two shipments delayed (one of them into the next year), we lost another two premium sales days, and we closed early for the holidays on another two days. Moreover, three days felt the impact and another was lost because of severe weather that included icy roads and tornado alerts. (Yes, really.) All of this had me expecting the worst.

But it turned out that December wasn't all bad portents. Like the double rainbow that straddled both stores in the midst of the tornado clouds, there were promising signs. Lower gas prices allowed more gift buying of comics by new customers than I'd seen in some time. Especially hot were comics for children. I sold out of nearly every *Marvel Adventures* comic book that proudly displayed how it was intended for "All Ages." Gift buyers next looked at Marvel's Teen comics, but, being unsure of the reasons they'd been rated Teen, they then turned to my 50¢ boxes and loaded up on '80s comics that carried the seal from the Comics Code Authority.

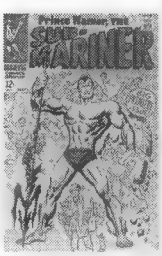
DC was left out in the cold on all this, since nowhere does it state All Ages on its All Ages comics, and the CCA seal has become so tiny that it almost requires a magnifying glass to see it. The bright spot for DC was the popularity of the "New Krypton" storyline in the Superman titles. The *Justice Society of America* tie-in to *Kingdom Come* finished strong, and *Gears of War* has easily become the current top-selling game-related comic book.

Marvel's "Dark Reign" crossover started fairly well but quickly quieted when reorders arrived. The problem with keeping an event secret is that there's no real buzz when no one knows what it's about.

Other than all that, the big demand was for back issues. I'm sure that several of my Key Sales will raise a few eyebrows, since a number of issues sold for reduced prices during my many Christmas sale events.

Key Sales (all unslabbed):

Adventure Comics #216 FN- $65
Amazing Spider-Man #35 VG+ $67.50
Amazing Spider-Man #36 VG $25
Amazing Spider-Man #56 GD+ $12
Amazing Spider-Man #67 VG- $17.75
Amazing Spider-Man #107 VG+ $14.25
Amazing Spider-Man #125 VG+ $13.50
Archie's Girl's Betty & Veronica #20 GD- $25
Avengers #4 (1st Silver Age Captain America) VG- $200
Batman #155 (1st Silver Age Penguin) VF- $56
Batman #404 VF+ $19.50
Casper & Wendy #8 VF+ $11
Detective Comics #419 FN+ $15
Green Lantern #37 VG+ $22
Mad #132 VF- $14.50
Spooky #7 VF+ $11
Sub-Mariner #1 VG- $22
Sub-Mariner #6 FN- $11.50
Uncanny X-Men #129 (1st Kitty Pryde) FN- $14
Uncanny X-Men at the State Fair of Texas #1 FN- $15
Watchmen #4 MT $12
World's Finest #59 FN $310
World's Finest #97 VG+ $45



Michael Tierney *runs* ***Collector's Edition*** *in North Little Rock and* ***The Comic Book Store*** *in Little Rock, Ark. He can be reached at* ***cbsrock@swbell.net*** *or* ***(501) 791-4222.***

Elektra by Frank Miller Omnibus

Marvel

$74.99, color, 384 pgs.

Writer: Frank Miller

Artist: Miller, Bill Sienkiewicz, *et al.*

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

Frank Miller's most famous creation — the *femme fatale* Elektra, who's arguably Daredevil's true love — gets the omnibus treatment in a volume collecting some of the character's obscure tales.

The story from *Bizarre Adventures* #28 is Elektra's first solo tale and pretty edgy for the time. Elektra is hired to stop someone from killing a little old man. She does just that and learns the man is a Nazi war criminal. Perhaps the best story in the omnibus is *Elektra Lives Again*, now a non-continuity tale (but nonetheless heartbreaking and powerful), in which Daredevil goes insane over Elektra's death.

Elektra Assassin by Miller and artist Bill Sienkiewicz is also here. Sienkiewicz' "different" art style (he used watercolors here instead of traditional pencils and inks) fit Miller's surreal vision for this story. The first issue is pretty disjointed, but readers who stick with it and read it in one sitting will get it — and appreciate it.

Reprints *Elektra Assassin* #1-8, *Elektra Lives Again*, *Bizarre Adventures* #28, *What If* (Vol. 1) #35.

www.marvel.com

ISBN: 978-0785127772

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Captain America CONTINUED
168. 15
169. 10
170. 12
171-172 10
173. 15
174. 12
175-176 10
177-183 8
184-187 5
188. 8
189-196 6
196/30¢ 20
197. 5
197/30¢ 20
198. 6
198/30¢ 20
199. 5
199/30¢ 20
200. 6
200/30¢ 20
201. 6
202. 4
203. 5
204-205 4
206. 5
207. 4
208-209 5
210. 4
210/35¢ 15
211. 4
211/35¢ 15
212. 4
212/35¢ 15
213. 4
213/35¢ 15
214. 4
214/35¢ 15
215-233 4
234. 6
235-240 4
241. 8
242-255 4
256-271 2
272. 3
273-275 2
276. 4
277-281 2
282. 3
283. 2
284. 3
285. 2
286-288 3
289-297 2
298. 3
299-331 2
332. 3
333-349 2
350. 3
351-382 2
383. 3
384-399 2
400. 3
401-420 2
420/CS 3
421-424 2
425. 3
425/Variant . . . 4
426-443 2
444. 3
445-454 2
Ann 1 35
Ann 2 20
Ann 3-4 8
Ann 5-7 3
Ann 8 12
➥Wolverine app
Ann 9-13 3
Ashcan 1 1
Special 1-2. . . . 4

Captain America MARVEL, 1995
1. 3
1/Flag 4
1/Conv 25
2-13 2
Ashcan 1/Both . 1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Captain America MARVEL, 1998
1. 4
1/Sunburst 5
2. 3
2/Variant 4
3-12 2
12/Ltd. 6
13-17 2
18. 3
19-24 2
25. 3
26-49 2
50. 6
Ann '98-'00 . . . 4
Ann 2001 3

Captain America MARVEL, 2002
1. 4
2-32 3
Book 5 20

Captain America MARVEL, 2005
1. 8
2-3 5
4-5 3
6. 7
6/Variant 5
7. 3
8. 5
9-21 3
22-24 5
25-25/Variant . 15
26-33 3
34. 6
35. 5
36-38 3

Captain America & The Falcon MARVEL, 2004
1-5 3
6. 4
7-14 3

Captain America Comics MARVEL, 1941
1. 80000
2. 20000
3. 10000
4. 6500
5. 5500

Captain America Comics CONTINUED
6. 4750
7. 5500
8. 4000
9-10 3600
11-12 3100
13. 3275
14-15 3100
16. 3600
17. 2585
18-20 2075
21-22 1850
22/A 12000
➥Giant size issue
23-25 1850
26-30 1650
31-35 1385
36. 1650
37. 1550
38-40 1285
41-58 1175
59. 2650
➥Cap origin
60. 1175
61. 1850
62-65 1075
66. 1400
67-70 1175
71-73 1025

UNSLABBED Near Mint

74. 4350
➥Cap Weird Tales
75. 2750
76-78 875

Captain Atom CHARLTON, 1965
78. 40
79-85 25
86-89 20

Captain Gallant CHARLTON, 1955
1. 11
1/A-3 8
4. 5

Captain Marvel MARVEL, 1968
1. 60
2-3 18
4. 24
5. 15
6. 30
7-8 15
9. 25
10-15 15
16. 25
17-24 22
➥Thanos War starts
25-27 25
28. 30
29. 16
30. 12
31. 16
32-33 12
34. 6
35-37 3
38. 5
39-44 3
44/30¢ 20
45. 3
45/30¢ 20
46-47 3
48. 9
49. 3
50. 10
51-52 4
52/35¢ 15
53-54 3
55. 5
56. 3
57. 6
58-62 3

Captain Marvel Adventures FAWCETT, 1941
1. 27500

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2. 3500
3. 1800
4. 1200
5. 1050
6-7 750
8-10 675
11-15 590
16-17 550
18. 1800
➥1st Mary Marvel
19-20 500
21-22 400
23. 610
➥1st Mr. Mind
24-40 225
41. 190
42. 163
43-109 125
110-120 80
121. 115
➥Cap Marvel origin
122-150 80

Captain Marvel Jr. FAWCETT, 1942
1. 4000
2. 1500
3. 865
4. 915
5. 735
6-8 545
9-10 500
11-15 390
16-20 340
21-25 275
26-30 235
31-40 205
41-50 180
51-70 155
71-80 135
81-119 120

Capt. Savage and His Leatherneck Raiders MARVEL, 1968
1. 35
2. 25
3-11 15
12-19 10

Capt. Storm DC, 1964
1. 28
2-5 18
6. 14
7-15 12
16-18 9

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Cat MARVEL, 1972
1. 35
2. 15
3. 12
4. 10

Catwoman DC, 1989
1-2 3
3-4 2

Catwoman DC, 1993
0. 2
1-10 3
11-50 2
50/Both 3
51-94 2
1000000. 3
Ann 1-4 4

Catwoman DC, 2002
1. 4
2-62 3

Cerebus the Aardvark AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, 1977
0. 4
0/Gold 6
1. 700
1/Counterfeit . 60
2. 150
3. 90
4. 75
5. 50
6. 35
7. 20
8-10 15
11. 12
12-22 10
23-31 6
32-40 5
41-50 4
51. 6
52-57 4
58-60 3
61-62 4
63-100 3
101-299 2
300. 4

Challengers of the Unknown DC, 1958
1. 1450
2. 375
3-8 220
9-10 140
11-15 90

UNSLABBED Near Mint

16-23 52
24-31 25
32-49 20
50-56 15
57-69 11
70-73 7
74. 14
➥Adams art; Deadman
75-80 7
81. 6
82-87 5

Chamber of Chills HARVEY, 1951
1. 350
2-4 275
5-9 250
10-19 225
20-25 200
26. 175

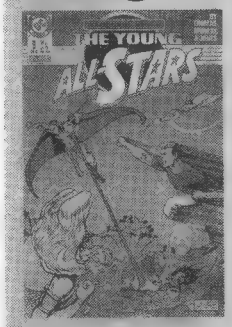
Chamber of Chills MARVEL, 1972
1. 25
2-10 15
11-22 12
22/30¢ 20
23. 12
23/30¢ 20
24-25 12

Chamber of Darkness MARVEL, 1968
1. 60
➥Becomes Monsters on the Prowl
2. 35
3. 30
4. 60
➥BWS Conan tryout
5-7 30
8-1/Special. . . 20

Champions MARVEL, 1975
1. 15
2-3 6
4-5 5
5/30¢ 20
6. 4
6/30¢ 20
7. 4
7/30¢ 20
8-14 4
14/35¢ 15
15. 4
15/35¢ 15
16-17 4

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #9 ★★★



"... You Have Nothing to Lose But Your Souls!"

After The Young All-Stars battle Baron Blitzkrieg and learn what was behind Green Lantern's actions, "Iron" Munro is given his father's journal.

This two-part story only tangentially tied in to *Millennium*, but wasn't necessary to enjoy that event. The events of *Millennium* only barely touched on this series, as well.

The story itself, which includes another appearance by The Tigress, works well. But was the cover, showing Neptune Perkins being boiled alive by Baron Blitzkrieg (which doesn't happen in the story) necessary?

DC
Feb 1988 • 25 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Murray

Near CGC copy **9.8** **Then $1.25 NOW $1**

©DC

Young All-Stars #10 ★★★½

DC • Mar 1988 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Brian Murray
Inks: Murray
Cover: Keith Wilson, Malcolm Jones III

"Like Father"

"Iron" Munro's origins are revealed in this tribute to Philip Wylie's *Gladiator*.

Roy and Dann Thomas do a fine job of adapting Wylie's novel, which has been in and out of print for many years, in this single issue. A later four-issue mini-series, *Legend*, does a better job, but this story does what it sets out to do: tie "Iron" Munro's origins to Wylie's work.

The Superman parallels are played up, with the greatest evil faced by Hugo Danner, aside from the horrors of World War I, being manipulative congressmen and bankers. Danner's powers are also similar to those exhibited by The Man of Steel.

Then $1.25 NOW $1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Charlton Bullseye
CHARLTON, 1981
1 . . . 7
2-10 . . . 2

Checkmate
GOLD KEY, 1962
1 . . . 30
2 . . . 20

Cheyenne
DELL, 1957
4-5 . . . 35
6-10 . . . 25
11-25 . . . 20

Chilling Adventures in Sorcery
ARCHIE, 1972
1 . . . 42
2 . . . 25
3-5 . . . 15

Choo-Choo Charlie
GOLD KEY, 1969
1 . . . 60

Cisco Kid
DELL, 1951
2 . . . 100
3 . . . 85
4-5 . . . 80
6-10 . . . 75
11-20 . . . 55
21-30 . . . 45
31-36 . . . 30
37-41 . . . 60

City of Heroes
BLUE KING STUDIOS, 2004
1-12 . . . 3

City of Heroes
IMAGE, 2005
1 . . . 3
1/Keown . . . 5
1/Perez . . . 4
2-17 . . . 3

Civil War
MARVEL, 2006
1 . . . 5
2 . . . 7
2/Variant . . . 8
3 . . . 5
3/2nd . . . 3
4 . . . 5
4/Variant . . . 3

5 . . . 4
5/Variant . . . 3
6 . . . 4
Choosing Sides 1 . . . 4
Confession 1 . . . 8
Front Line 1-10 . . . 3
The Initiative 1 . . . 6
War Crimes 1 . . . 4
X-Men 1-4 . . . 3

Classic X-Men
MARVEL, 1986
1 . . . 6
2 . . . 4
3-29 . . . 3
30-45 . . . 2

Claw the Unconquered
DC, 1975
1 . . . 7
2 . . . 4
3 . . . 3
4-6 . . . 2
7 . . . 4
8-12 . . . 2

Clerks: The Comic Book
ONI, 1998
1 . . . 5
2 . . . 3
Holiday 1 . . . 4

Clue Comics
HILLMAN, 1943
1 . . . 530
2-3 . . . 360
4-6 . . . 225
7-9 . . . 260
10-12 . . . 155

Combat
DELL, 1961
1 . . . 10
2 . . . 20
3 . . . 18
4 . . . 25
➥JFK story
5 . . . 16
6-9 . . . 12
10-20 . . . 9
21-27 . . . 8
28-40 . . . 6

Combat Kelly
MARVEL, 1951
1 . . . 175
2 . . . 85
3-11 . . . 70
12-28 . . . 65

29-38 . . . 45
39-44 . . . 30

Combat Kelly
MARVEL, 1972
1 . . . 10
2-3 . . . 6
4-9 . . . 4

Comic Cavalcade
DC, 1942
1 . . . 7000
2 . . . 2400
3 . . . 1650
4-5 . . . 100
6-10 . . . 875
11-12 . . . 750
13 . . . 950
➥Sol. Grundy app.
14-20 . . . 750
21-29 . . . 650
30 . . . 275
31-40 . . . 150
41-50 . . . 100
51-62 . . . 90
63 . . . 150

Conan
DARK HORSE, 2004
0 . . . 4
1 . . . 10
1/2nd . . . 3
2 . . . 5
2/2nd-47 . . . 3

Conan the Barbarian
MARVEL, 1970
1 . . . 160
➥1st comics Conan
2 . . . 55
3 . . . 72
4 . . . 26
5 . . . 30
6-7 . . . 26
8 . . . 30
9 . . . 20
➥Giant-size
10-11 . . . 35
➥Giant-size
12 . . . 15
13-14 . . . 20
15 . . . 17
16 . . . 20
17 . . . 17
18 . . . 20
19 . . . 17
20 . . . 27
➥1st Red Sonja
21-24 . . . 20

25 . . . 10
26-30 . . . 8
31-35 . . . 7
36-38 . . . 9
39-47 . . . 7
48-50 . . . 6
51-61 . . . 5
61/30¢ . . . 20
62 . . . 5
62/30¢ . . . 20
63 . . . 5
63/30¢ . . . 20
64 . . . 5
64/30¢ . . . 20
65 . . . 5
65/30¢ . . . 20
66-75 . . . 5
75/35¢ . . . 15
76 . . . 5
76/35¢ . . . 15
77 . . . 5
77/35¢ . . . 15
78 . . . 5
78/35¢ . . . 15
79 . . . 5
79/35¢ . . . 15
80-93 . . . 5
94-99 . . . 4
100 . . . 6
101-275 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 10
Ann 2-3 . . . 6
Ann 4-12 . . . 2
Special 1 . . . 3

Conan the Barbarian
MARVEL, 1997
1-3 . . . 3

Conan the Destroyer
MARVEL, 1985
1-2 . . . 1

Conan the King
MARVEL, 1984
20-55 . . . 2

Crazy
MARVEL, 1973
1 . . . 16
2-3 . . . 10

Crazy
MARVEL, 1973
1 . . . 16
2-3 . . . 10
4-5 . . . 5
6-15 . . . 3
16-94 . . . 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Crazy
ATLAS, 1953
1 . . . 225
2 . . . 165
3 . . . 125
4-7 . . . 95

Creatures on the Loose
MARVEL, 1971
10 . . . 50
➥1st Kull; Wrightson
11-15 . . . 15
16-22 . . . 10
23-26 . . . 6
27-29 . . . 5
30 . . . 25
➥Man-Wolf
31 . . . 12
32-36 . . . 8
37 . . . 12
King Size 1 . . . 10

Creepy
WARREN, 1964
1 . . . 160
2 . . . 50
3 . . . 25
4 . . . 35
5 . . . 18
6 . . . 15
7-8 . . . 24

9 . . . 45
10 . . . 20
11-13 . . . 15
14 . . . 22
15 . . . 25

Creepy
CONTINUED
16-17 . . . 30
18 . . . 25
19-20 . . . 15
21-22 . . . 12
23-25 . . . 11
26-31 . . . 10
32 . . . 35
33-35 . . . 10
36 . . . 15
37-38 . . . 10
39-40 . . . 7
41 . . . 10
42-47 . . . 6
48 . . . 9
49 . . . 6
50 . . . 12
51-54 . . . 6
55 . . . 9
56-64 . . . 5
65 . . . 8
66-73 . . . 5
74 . . . 10
75-76 . . . 5
77 . . . 10
78-82 . . . 5

83 . . . 6
84 . . . 5
85-87 . . . 6
88-90 . . . 5
91 . . . 6
92-94 . . . 5
95 . . . 6
96-100 . . . 5
101-102 . . . 4
103 . . . 6
104-112 . . . 4
113 . . . 7
114-140 . . . 4
141 . . . 5
142 . . . 6
143-144 . . . 5
145 . . . 6
146 . . . 22
Ann '71-'72 . . . 15
YB '68-'70 . . . 18

Crime & Justice
CHARLTON, 1951
1 . . . 240
2 . . . 125
3-5 . . . 100
6-10 . . . 80
11-19 . . . 65
20-23 . . . 50

Crime Does Not Pay
LEV GLEASON, 1942
22 . . . 800
23 . . . 525
24 . . . 375
25-30 . . . 225
31-41 . . . 115
42 . . . 110
43-50 . . . 90
51-60 . . . 65
61-70 . . . 60
71-80 . . . 50
81-90 . . . 42
91-100 . . . 35
101-110 . . . 32
111-130 . . . 30
131-146 . . . 26
Ann 1944 . . . 700
Ann 1945 . . . 600
Ann '46-'49 . 500
Ann '50-'53 . 400

Crime Patrol
E.C., 1948
7 . . . 600
8-9 . . . 575
10 . . . 550
11-14 . . . 500
15 . . . 2200
➥1st Cryptkeeper

16 . . . 1500

Crime Suspen-Stories
E.C., 1950
1 . . . 800
1/A . . . 1000
➥#1 marked out
2 . . . 475
3-5 . . . 315
6-10 . . . 235
11-12 . . . 185
13 . . . 210
14-15 . . . 185
16 . . . 190
17 . . . 235
➥Frazetta art
18-19 . . . 170
20 . . . 215
21 . . . 115
22-23 . . . 145
24-27 . . . 115

Crisis on Infinite Earths
DC, 1985
1 . . . 5
2-3 . . . 4
4 . . . 3
5 . . . 5
6 . . . 3

CBG Trendwatcher

John Tinkess, Another Dimension

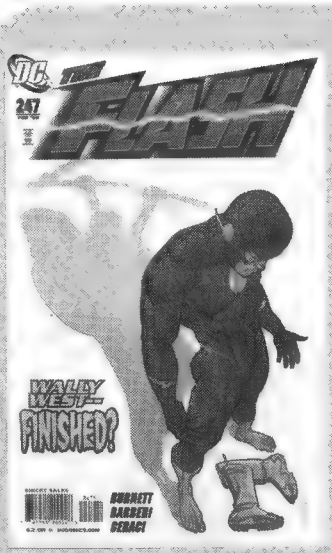
Every year, when December rolls around, we see a distinct shift in our sales patterns, as trade-paperback sales increase while new-comics sales tend to soften. Many of our regulars get too busy with other commitments during the holidays to keep up their regular visits, but at the same time we see a huge influx of holiday shoppers. This year was no exception, as gift buyers scooped up copies of *Fables, Y: The Last Man, The Walking Dead, Batman: The Killing Joke*, the *Joker* hardcover, *Buffy, Serenity, Wanted*, and *Hellboy* among many others. The #1 gift purchase this year, though, was the *Watchmen* trade paperback. After more than 20 years in print, *Watchmen* was our best-selling book this year, outselling everything else by more than a 2:1 margin.

New-comics sales were stronger than expected this month, thanks to the conclusion to *Secret Invasion* followed by our usual list of best-sellers: *Final Crisis, New Avengers, Batman, Justice Society of America, Justice League of America, Amazing Spider-Man, Detective, Uncanny X-Men,* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Marvel's "Dark Reign" also had a solid start, which should keep interest in many Marvel titles high for the next few months. Despite nasty winter weather, the combination of so many strong titles shipping this month along with some spectacular trade-paperback sales resulted in the best December sales in our history.

The one black mark on such a busy month is the number of new comics still sitting on the shelves, unsold. Marvel and DC's core titles are selling as well as they ever have for us, but both companies also continue to pump out far too many new one-shots and mini-series featuring B-list characters and/or unknown creative teams. While the comics industry has often been described as recession-proof, there are limits to how much more customers will continue to spend. As we see more comics creep up to a $3.99 cover price, our customers are becoming much more selective, particularly when it comes to non-essential spinoffs and out-of-continuity specials. Such titles as *El Diablo, Vixen, Adam: Legend of the Blue Marvel, Age of Sentry,* and *Vigilante* are facing an uphill battle to attract readers on our crowded shelves.

A big bright spot among the new titles this month was *Incognito* by Ed Brubaker and Sean Phillips. During his time at Marvel, Brubaker has become one of its most consistent performers — with *Captain America, Daredevil,* and *Criminal* not only maintaining their audiences but also gaining new readers each month. In its first week, *Incognito* has already outsold *Criminal* and *Daredevil*, and I expect this gritty, *noir* take on super-heroes to hold up well throughout its run.

John Tinkess *runs* ***Another Dimension*** *in Calgary, Alberta. He can be reached at* ***comics@another-dimension.com*** *or* ***(403) 283-7078.***



The Flash #247

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Alan Burnett
Artists: Various
reviewed by **Martin Gray**
★★★

Flash fact! This is a book you'll fast forget — and, given that this is Wally's final issue, that's a disgrace. Sure, he fights to save the life of his wife, but it's a manufactured conflict; she's only in mortal danger because the series is ending. And there are dull cameos by The Titans and JLA because Wally's not up to rescuing his kids from The Queen Bee. There isn't even a proper Flash villain for Wally's last battle, just a JLA adversary who's long since lost her luster.

There is decent narrative toward the end of the issue, as Wally ponders his kids' future, and the art jam team led by Carlos Barberi is competent. But, dang it, Wally's run has outlasted that of the returning Barry Allen, and he gets nothing like the sendoff his mentor received. There's no reminder of the fantastic supporting casts Wally's had, no echoes of his greatest battles. The series just limps to a halt, not so much running hot as being run-of-the-mill.

www.dccomics.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Crisis on Infinite Earths
CONTINUED
7-8 5
9-12 3

Crypt of Shadows
MARVEL, 1973
1 35
2 16
3 15
4-5 12
6-14 10
15-21 8

Crypt of Terror
E.C., 1950
17 1000
18 800
19 750

Dagar the Invincible
GOLD KEY, 1972
1 16
2 11
3-11 7
12-14 5
15-18 3
19 2

Dakkari
DELL, 1967
1 35
2-4 30

Danger Trail
DC, 1950
1 875
2 600
3 1250
➥Scarce
4-5 385

Daredevil
MARVEL, 1964
-1 2
1 3000
➥1st Daredevil
2 750
3 550
4 400
5 300
6 225
7 675
➥1st red costume
8-10 135
11-15 85
➥Spider-Man app.
16-17 120
➥Spider-Man app.
18 70
➥1st Gladiator
19 60
20 55
21-27 50
28-30 45
31-42 40
43 45
44-49 30
50-52 33
53-71 20
72-80 17
81 25
➥Giant-size
82-83 17
84-99 14
100 30
➥Origin recap
101-130 8
131 75
➥1st Bullseye
132 15
132/30¢ 20
133 6
133/30¢ 20
134 6
134/30¢ 20
135 6
135/30¢ 20
136 6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

136/30¢ 20
137-146 6
146/35¢ 15
147 6
147/35¢ 15
148 6
148/35¢ 15
149-157 6
158 50
➥Frank Miller starts
159 22
160-161 17
162 9
163 18
164-167 11
168 75
➥1st Elektra
169 16
170 10
171 12
172-177 7
178-180 6
181 15
➥Elektra dies
182-183 7
184 6
185 5
186 6
187-190 5
191 6
192-195 3
196 6
197-204 3
205 4
206-226 3
227 4
➥FM Born Again
228-247 3
248-249 4
250 3
251 5
252 4
253 3
254 6
➥1st Typhoid Mary
255-257 3
258 4
259-295 3
296-299 2
300 3
301-303 2
304 3
305-311 2
312 3
313-318 2
319 5
320-321 2
321/Variant ... 3
322-324 2
325 3
326-349 2
350 3
350/Variant ... 4
351-374 2
375 3
376-379 2
380 3
Ann 1 50
Ann 2-3 9
Ann 4 8
Ann 5 4
Ann 6-10 3
Ann 1997 4

Daredevil
MARVEL, 1998
0.5 5
1 7
1/Ltd. 50
1/Variant 9
2/A-2/B 5
3-5 4
5/A 5
6 3
7 4
8-15 3
16 5
16/Unlimited .. 6
17 3
17/Unlimited .. 5
➥Newsstand variant
18-20 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

20/Unlimited .. 5
21 3
21/Unlimited .. 5
22 3
22/Unlimited .. 5
23 3
23/Unlimited .. 5
24-36 3
36/No # 5
➥Newsstand; no #
37 3
37/Unlimited .. 5
➥Newsstand variant
37/No # 4
➥Newsstand; no #
38-56 3
57 4
58-64 3
65 4
66-89 3
89/Sketch 6
90-99 3

Daring Comics
MARVEL, 1944
9 1100
10 950
11-12 875

Dark Horse Presents
DARK HORSE, 1986
1 4
2-4 3
5-9 2
10-16 3
17 2
18 3
19-23 2
24 6
➥1st comics Aliens
25-27 2
28 3
29-31 2
32 4
➥Concrete app.
33-35 3
36 4
36/A 3
37-39 2
40 3
41-49 2
50 3
51 4
➥2nd Sin City
52-53 3
54 4
55 2
56-57 4
58 2
59-61 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

62 4
➥All Sin City
63-66 3
67 4
68-134 3
135 4
136-149 3
150 5
151-157 3
Ann '97-'00 ... 5

Dark Knight Strikes Again
DC, 2001
1 3
1/A 5
2 3
2/A 4
3 3
3/A 4

Dark Mansion of Forbidden Love
DC, 1971
1 125
2-4 50

Darkness
TOP COW, 1996
0-10/B 3
11/A 8
11/B-24 3
25 4
26-28 3
28/Graham 5
29-Ashcan 1/A . 3

Darkness
IMAGE, 2002
1 4
1/A-24 3

Darkness & Tomb Raider
TOP COW, 2005
1 3

Dark Shadows
GOLD KEY, 1969
1 175
1/A 25
2-3 48
4-7 25
8-16 20
17-20 12
21-35 10

Dazzler
MARVEL, 1981
1 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2 2
3-42 1

DC Comics Presents
DC, 1978
1 9
2 7
3 4
4-5 2
6 6
7-9 2
9/Whitman 6
10-25 2
26 14
➥1st New Teen Titans
27 3
28-41 2
42-43 1
44 2
45-46 1
47 17
➥1st Masters Universe
48-50 1
51 6
52 3
53-71 1
72 2
73-76 1
77-78 3
79-84 1
85 6
86 4
87-92 1
93 2
94-97 1
Ann 1- 3

DC 100 Page Super Spectacular
DC, 1971
4 175
5 350
➥Scarce
6 150
7 60
8-9 75
10-13 60
14-17 45
18 30
19 24
20 35
21-22 22

DC Special
DC, 1968
1 60
2 50
3 35
4 25
5-14 20
15 16

UNSLABBED Near Mint

16-28 10
29 12

DC Special Series
DC, 1977
1 10
2-5 7
6-8 6
9 16
10-14 6
15 8
16 20
➥Jonah Hex dies
17-18 5
19-20 6
21 12
➥1st Miller Batman
22-26 6
27 18

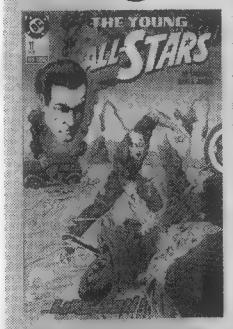
DC Super-Stars
DC, 1976
1 10
2-3 5
4 2
5 10
6-9 2
10 5
11 7
12-13 2
14-15 4
16 3
17 16
➥1st new Huntress
18 2

Deadly Hands of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974
1 30
2 8
3-5 6
6-10 5
11-19 4
20 7
21-30 3
31 6
32-33 3
Special 1 4

Defenders
MARVEL, 1972
1 90
2 35
3 30
4-5 26
6-7 16
8 25
9 16
10 55

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #11 ★★★★



DC • Apr 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Michael Bair
Inks: Malcolm Jones III, Grant Miehm
Cover: Bob Lewis, Jones

"... Like Son!"

More of Hugo Danner's life is revealed, including the revelation of how "Iron" Munro's powers manifested themselves.

Roy and Dann Thomas extrapolate from the events of Philip Wylie's *Gladiator* to create "Iron" Munro and carry on Hugo Danner's life and career after the events of that novel.

It's an outstanding "sequel," showing yet again what a great job the Thomases can do with such material.

Michael Bair's art is adequate, but it's a shame that Brian Murray left the series with #10. His covers and interior work were top-notch.

Now to see how the other Young All-Stars came to be ...

© DC

Then $1.25 NOW $1

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #12 ★★★½

DC
May 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Howard Simpson
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Bair, Mike Beachum

" 'M' is for 'Monster'!"

In an attempt to free her from her supernatural curse, The Young All-Stars take Fury to Project M.

Events and characters from *All-Star Squadron*, *Secret Origins*, and *Weird War Tales*, among other sources, all come together in this issue. There are appearances by Deathbolt, The Ultra-Humanite, Per Degaton, Miss America, The Creature Commandos, The G.I. Robot, King Kong, and even a T. rex from "The War That Time Forgot."

It's a great set-up for a multi-part story, but some readers may need a scorecard to keep track of all the players. What Roy Thomas had in mind for Miss Liberty is unknown.

No CBG copies **Then $1.25 NOW $1**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
➥Avengers War	
11	15
12-13	9
14-16	10
17-20	7
21-24	6
25-29	7
30-33	4
34-38	5
34-38/30¢	20
39-47	4
48-52	5
48-52/35¢	15
53-62	4
63	5
64-92	4
93-100	3
101-152	2
Ann 1	12

Dell Giants
DELL, 1959

21	105
22	80
23	90
24-25	75
26	140
➥Carl Barks art	
27-28	75
29	90
30	75
31	90
32	65
33	85
34	65
35	95
36-37	80
38-39	85
40	60
41	85
42	70
43	115
44	85
45-46	55
47	60
48	125
➥1st Flintstones	
49	75
50	65
51-54	40
55	60

Detective Comics
DC, 1936

0	3
1	80000
2	18250
3	10800
4-5	6850
6-7	4450
8	6500
9-17	4350
18	5000
19	4150
20	6300
21	3250
22	3950
23-26	3250
27	225000
➥1st Batman	
27/2nd	9
28	25000
➥2nd Batman	
29	35000
30	7500
31	27500
➥Batman vs. Monk	
32	6000
33	50000
➥Batman origin	
34	7500
35	10000
36-37	6500
38	57500
➥1st Robin	
39	6000
40	6500
41	4000
42-45	3000
46-50	2000
51-57	1750
58	4750
➥1st Penguin	
59	2000
60	1750
61	1500
62	2250
63	1750
64	5000
➥1st Boy Commandos	
65	2250
66	4000
➥1st Two-Face	
67	2000
68-69	1750
70-71	1500
72-75	1250
76	1500
77-79	1000
80	1250
81-83	1000
84	900
85	1250
86-90	900
91	1000
92-98	800
99	950
100	1000
101	700
102	950
103-108	625
109	850
110-113	625
114	800
115-117	625
118	825
119	600
120	800
➥Penguin app.	
121	600
122	1225
123	600
124	800
125-127	600
128	800
129-130	600
131-136	525
137	675
138	925
➥Robotman origin	
139	500
140	4000
➥1st Riddler	
141	575
142	1250
143-148	575
149	675
150	550
151	600
152-155	525
156	625
157-160	500
161-167	525
168	3750
➥Joker origin	
169-170	500
171	700
172-176	500
177-179	400
180	450
181-186	400
187	425
188-189	400
190	600
191-192	400
193	450
194-199	400
200	575
201-202	400
203	450
204	400
205	575
206-210	400
211	450
212	400
213	525
214-224	375
225	4500
➥1st Manhunter	
226	1500
227-229	500
230	550
231	400
232	300
233	1250
➥1st Batwoman	
234	325
235	600
236	350
237-240	300
241-260	250
261-264	200
265	325
266	200
267	250
268-271	200
272	175
273	200
274-280	150
281-297	125
298	200
299-310	100
311	200
➥1st Catman	
312-326	100
327	225
➥New Bat symbol	
328	175
➥Alfred dies	
329-330	75
331	65
332	115
➥Joker	
333-340	60
341	75
342-352	60
353-358	75
359	350
➥1st Batgirl	
360-362	65
363	100
➥2nd Batgirl	
364	60
365	90
366-368	60
369	75
370	45
371	80
➥Batmobile	
372-376	50
377	65
378-380	50
381-386	40
387	75
388	50
389-390	35
391-393	25
394	35
395	125
➥N. Adams art	
396-397	35
398-399	30
400	175
➥1st Man-Bat	
401	30
402	55
403-404	35
405-407	30
408-410	40
411	30
➥1st Talia	
412-424	25
425-427	20
428-436	15
437	20
➥100-page issue	
438-445	28
➥100-page issue	
446	12
447-450	8
451-455	6
456-457	9
458-462	6
463	45
➥1st Calculator	
464	6
465-468	9
469-470	5
471-473	8
474-476	15
477-479	8
480	5
481	7
482	5
483	8
484	5
485-499	4
500	5
501-503	4
504	6
505-523	4
524	5
525-534	4
535	5
536-564	4
565-568	3
569-570	4
571	3
572	4
573-574	3
575	4
576-577	3
578-585	4
586-587	3
588-590	4
591-675	3
675/Variants	4
676	3
677-682	2
682/Variant	3
683-699	2
700/Both	4
701-718	2
719	3
720	4
721-722	3
723-740	2
741	3
742-746	2
747-749	3
750	5
751	12
752-774	3
775	4
776-799	3
800	4
801-816	3
817	12
818-839	3
1000000	4
1M/Variant	15
Ann 1	5
Ann 2	4
Ann 3-7	3
Ann 8	4
Ann 9	3
Ann 10	4

Devil Dinosaur
MARVEL, 1978

1	5
2-3	4
4	5
5	4
6-9	3

Devil Kids
HARVEY, 1962

1	150
2	75
3	50
4-5	25
6-10	20
11-17	15
18-20	10
21-30	8
31-40	5
41-60	4
61-79	3
80-107	2

Dirty Dozen
DELL, 1967

1	25

Doctor Solar, Man of the Atom
GOLD KEY, 1962

1	150
2	80
3	50
4	60
5	30
6-10	25
11-14	16
15	20
16-20	16
21-27	12
28-31	4

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1968

169	75
170-171	30
172-173	27
174	20
175	35
176-183	27

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1974

1	25
2	18
3-4	10
5-6	8
7	7
8-9	4
10	7
11	6
12-13	4
13/30¢	20
14	3
14/30¢	20
15	3
15/30¢	20
16	3
16/30¢	20
17	3
17/30¢	20
18-23	3
23/35¢	15
24	3
24/35¢	15
25	3
25/35¢	15
26-81	2
Ann 1	6
Special 1	3

Donald Duck
DELL, 1952

26	300
27-29	100
30-44	65
45	125
46	175
➥Barks "Secret"	
47-51	65
52	150

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tinnel, Autobot City Comics & Toys

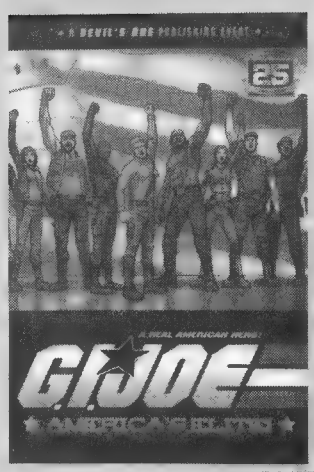
December was a good month for my first year in business. Marvel sales continue to rise for Mark Millar's "Old Man Logan" storyline in *Wolverine*. In my opinion, Millar has produced one of the best story arcs for *Wolverine* since Frank Miller did the original mini-series. Also, Jeph Loeb's *Hulk* #9 was the best-seller of the year, both in-store and online, with sales reaching more than 100 copies sold. I hope to see the creative team with The Hulk continue to bring terrific stories in the future.

One of the series I think is overlooked tremendously is the reboot of *Deadpool*. I believe Marvel picked the right time to bring his series back, tying it into *Secret Invasion* and "Dark Reign." This continues to sell out every month. The biggest disappointment for December for Marvel was its newest installment of the *What If?* series. The sales of this Marvel edition did not live up to the hype. I was thinking some of my best customers would pick this book up for part of their collection, but they apparently thought, "Don't fix what's not broken." Sorry, but I think Marvel bombed on the *What If?* series.

For DC, sales were extremely high for Grant Morrison's *Final Crisis*, which finally made its way to the shelf. The biggest sales surprises I can see from DC are such "New Krypton"-related titles as *Action Comics*, *Superman*, and *Supergirl*. Sales of all three titles have gone up more than 80%. But with something good always comes something bad. With DC it is the newest incarnation of *Vigilante* and *Superman/Supergirl: Maelstrom*. Sales for these two were disappointing. For DC, the most overlooked series would have to be the reunion of the original Teen Titans in *Titans*. While sales have been good, they should be better for the reunion of the old Teen Titans line-up. Other sell-outs for me included *Justice League of America* and *Justice Society of America*.

One company which is overlooked by many of my customers is Radical Comics. It has great storylines and art. Sales started well and soared upward in December with such titles as *Freedom Formula* (written by Edmund Shern) and *City of Dust* (written by Steve Niles). This is a publisher that I would continue to look out for, with Warren Ellis and Ian Edginton in such titles as *Hotwire* and *Aladdin*.

Michael Tinnel *runs* ***Autobot City Comics & Toys*** *in* ***Benton, Ark.***
He can be reached at ***AutobotCityComics@yahoo.com*** *or (501) 778-4440.*



G.I. Joe: America's Elite — World War III Omnibus

Devil's Due

$34.99, color, 328 pgs.
Writer: Mark Powers
Artists: Mike Bear, Mike Shoynet, Pat Quinn
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

Devil's Due — which brought *G.I. Joe* back in 2001 — ends its run on the licensed property with a bang. The 12-part "World War III" epic has the Joes calling in all reserves, as Cobra Commander destabilizes the world's hotspots by arming them with M.A.R.S. technology. He even nukes Boston and strings up his own son, Billy. He's gone too far this time. What hurts the final product is that the art is flat and bland in plenty of places, and it's hard to recognize some of the characters.

DVD-style extras include a cover featuring all 236 Joes (including such non-canonical ones as The Fridge) and an index. Devil's Due then repeats this with Cobra. Herb Trimpe does an homage cover to Marvel's *G.I. Joe* #155, in which Gen. Colton and Gen. Hawk are folding the U.S. flag with several Joes bearing witness; a nice touch.

IDW Publishing now has the rights to publish the further adventures of *G.I. Joe*. Devil's Due is to be commended for dusting off this 1980s property and breathing new life into it.

Reprints: *G.I. Joe: America's Elite* #25-36, *G.I. Joe Special Missions: The Enemy* #1.

www.devilsdue.net
ISBN: 978-1934692028

Donald Duck
CONTINUED

UNSLABBED Near Mint
53. 65
54. 125
➥Barks Forbid. Valley
55-58. 50
59-60. 125
➥Barks "Ants"
61-67. 40
68. 100
➥Barks art
69-70. 40
71-84. 30
85-120. 25
121-135. 20
136-150. 15
151-190. 10
191-210. 5
211-216. 3
217. 5
218-219. 10
220-228. 15
229-240. 8
241-245. 15
246. 17
247-249. 5
250. 8
251-260. 4
261-279. 3
280-285. 2
286. 3
287-307. 2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1964

UNSLABBED Near Mint
86. 135
87. 70
88-90. 50
91-98. 40
99. 60
100. 75
101-120. 25
121. 45
➥Doom Patrol dies
122-124. 2

Doorway to Nightmare
DC, 1978

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 7
2-5. 3

Dudley Do-Right
CHARLTON, 1970

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 45
2. 18
3. 12
4-7. 10

Dynamo
TOWER, 1966

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 35
2-3. 25
4. 40

Eerie
WARREN, 1965

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 175
2. 100
3. 40
4-6. 30
7-10. 28
11-16. 18
17. 60
➥Scarce
18-39. 18
40. 6
41-60. 12
61-70. 10
71-80. 9
81. 70
➥Frazetta cover
82-100. 9
101-139. 8
YB 1970. 36
YB 1971. 25
YB 1972. 18

80 Page Giant Magazine
DC, 1964

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 295
2. 150
3-5. 125
7. 150
8. 265
➥Secret Origins
9-11. 125
12-15. 80

Eternals
MARVEL, 1976

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 10
1/30¢. 25
2. 5
2/30¢. 15
3-5. 3
6-12. 2
12/35¢. 15
13. 2
13/35¢. 15
14. 2
14/35¢. 15
15. 2
15/35¢. 15
16. 2
16/35¢. 15
17-19. 2
Ann 1. 7

Eternal Warrior
VALIANT, 1992

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 4
1/GoldEmboss 25
1/Gold. 10
2. 3
3. 2
4. 5
5-7. 2
8. 3
9-21. 1
22. 2
23-25. 1
26. 4
27. 1
27/VVSS. . . . 125
28-29. 1
30-40. 2
41-45. 3
46-49. 4
50. 7
Special 1. 4
YB 1-YB 2. . . . 5

Famous First Edition
DC, 1974

UNSLABBED Near Mint
F-4. 15
➥Whiz #2
F-5. 13
➥Batman #1
F-6. 10
➥W. Woman #1
F-7. 12
➥All-Star #3
F-8. 9
➥Flash #1
C-26. 10
➥Action #1
C-28. 9
➥Detective #27
C-30. 10
➥Sensation #1
C-61. 9
➥Superman #1

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1961

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 20000
➥1st Fantastic Four
1/Golden. . . . 70
2. 4500
➥1st Skrulls
3. 3000
4. 3500
5. 5000
➥1st Dr. Doom
6. 2000
7. 1250
8. 1200
9-10. 1150
11. 1000
12. 2700
➥Thing vs. Hulk
13. 600
14. 500
15. 700
16-19. 500
20. 600
21. 450
22-23. 250
24. 240
25. 550
26. 600
➥Avengers app.
27. 300
28. 500
➥X-Men app.
29-31. 260
32-34. 250
35-40. 165
41-43. 110
44. 85
45. 325
➥1st Inhumans
46. 150
47. 100
48. 460
➥1st Silver Surfer
49. 350
50. 400
51. 150
52. 300
➥1st Black Panther
53. 140
54. 105
55. 210
➥Thing vs. Surfer
56. 100
57. 115
58. 90
59. 60
60. 65
61. 70
62-63. 60
64. 50
65. 55
66. 115
➥1st Warlock
67. 105
68-69. 60
70. 55
71. 45
72. 100
➥Silver Surfer app.
73. 80
74. 85
75. 55
76. 45
77. 50
78. 35
79. 50
80-85. 40
86. 50
87. 40
88-89. 35
90-93. 30
94. 40
95-96. 30
97-98. 25
99. 30
100. 70
101-105. 30
106. 22
107. 30
108. 22
109-111. 20
112. 175
➥Thing vs. Hulk
113. 25
114. 27
115. 25
116. 65
➥52 pages
117-120. 15
121. 30
➥Galactus app.
122. 45
123. 27
124-125. 20
126. 30
127. 35
128. 30
129. 25
130-132. 15
133-145. 12
146. 10
147. 15
148-154. 10
155. 15
156-158. 12
159-163. 10
164. 9
165. 7
166. 10
167. 15
168-169. 10
169/30¢. 20
170. 10
170/30¢. 20
171. 6
171/30¢. 20
172. 6
172/30¢. 20
173. 6
173/30¢. 20
174-183. 6
183/35¢. 15
184. 6
184/35¢. 15
185. 5
185/35¢. 15
186. 5
186/35¢. 15
187. 5
187/35¢. 15
188-200. 5
➥Byrne script/art begins
201-239. 4
240-248. 3
249. 4
250. 5
251. 4
252-255. 3
256. 4
257-259. 3
260. 5
261. 4
262-268. 3
269. 4
270. 3
271. 4
272. 5
273-286. 3
287-295. 2
296. 3
297-299. 2
300. 3
301-318. 2
319. 3
320-346. 2
347-350. 3
351-357. 2
358. 3
359-370. 2
371. 3
372-374. 1
375. 3
376-378. 1
379-380. 2
381. 3
382. 2
383-387. 1
387/Variant. . . 3
388-394. 2
394/CS. 3
395-398. 2
398/Variant. . . 3
399. 2
399/Variant. . . 3
400. 4
401-415. 2
416. 4
500. 45
500/CS. 4
501. 100
502. 5
503-506. 3
507. 35
508. 50
509-510. 40
512-513. 3
514-516. 2
517-526. 3
527. 7
➥Straczynski starts
527/Variant. . . 4
527/DirCut. . . . 5
527/Conv. 7
528-535. 3
536. 10
537. 7
538-560. 3
Ann 1. 900
Ann 2. 500
Ann 3. 175
Ann 4. 90
Ann 5. 60
Ann 6. 40
Ann 7-8. 18
Ann 9. 10
Ann 10-11. . . . 8
Ann 12-14. . . . 5
Ann 15-27. . . . 3
Special 1. 2
Ashcan 1. 1

Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1998

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 3
1/A. 4
2-5. 3
6-24. 2
25. 3
26-34. 2
35. 3
36-49. 2
50-51. 4
52. 2
53. 3
54. 4
55-59. 2
60. 1
61-70. 2
Ann 1998. 5
Ann 1999. 4
Ann 2001. 3

Fantasy Masterpieces
MARVEL, 1966

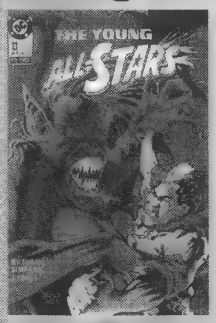
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 75
2. 35
3. 30
4-8. 18
9. 30
➥Torch origin
10. 10
11. 15

Fear
MARVEL, 1970

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1. 95
2. 30
3-4. 15

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #13 ★★★½



"Deadlier than the Male ...?"

The Ultra-Humanite's rampage through Project M frees Tisiphone, one of the Greek Furies, who then attacks and seriously injures "Iron" Munro.

It's a slam-bang issue from start to finish, as The Young All-Stars face not one, but two, foes this issue. The Ultra-Humanite has proven capable of taking on the entire All-Star Squadron in the past, so, now housed in a T. rex's body, he'll be hard for the The Young All-Stars to corral?

As for Tisiphone, it seems strange for a heroine to be given powers by a group of uncontrollable mystical beings who can take her over at any time.

DC
Jun 1988 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Howard Simpson
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Jones

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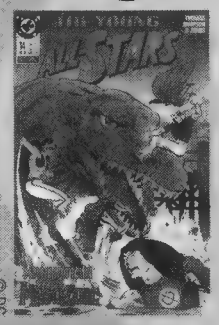
Young All-Stars #14 ★★★



"Hell Hath No Fury ... !"

"Iron" Munro and Flying Fox trick Tisiphone into taking down the Ultra-Humanite before the other Furies reclaim her. Meanwhile, Mekanique aids Per Degaton in his evil schemes.

The resemblance between "Iron" Munro and a certain no-longer-in-continuity Golden Age Man of Steel are reinforced here, with Munro's vulnerability to magic and ability to leap, rather than fly.

The weirder thing is the continuing revelations of Flying Fox's powers. Which Golden Age hero's "energy" does he represent?

And isn't it convenient that Mekanique's schemes dovetail with Degaton's?

DC
Jul 1988 • 25 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Howard Simpson
Inks: Millgan Jones III
Cover: Tom Harris Jones

No CBG Copies

Then $1.25 NOW $1

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
5	20
6-9	15
10	35
➥Man-Thing starts	
11	18
12	12
13-14	9
15-17	12
18	9
19	25
➥1st Howard Duck	
20	20
➥Morbius begins	
21	9
22	7
23	8
24	12
➥Blade app.	
25	8
26-29	7
30	12
31	7

Felix the Cat
DELL, 1948

1	315
2	145
3	100
4-5	85
6-10	70
11-20	60
21-30	85
31	45
32-33	75
34-35	45
36	75
37	225
38-40	75
41	60
42-51	55
52-61	48
Ann 1	200
Ann 2	165

Fightin' 5
CHARLTON, 1964

28	20
29-30	10
31-39	9
40	18
➥1st Peacemaker	
41	10
42-49	3

Fightin' Army
CHARLTON, 1956

16	24
17-20	18
21-30	15
31-40	12
41-50	10
51-75	8
76	10
➥Willy Schultz	
77-100	6

Fightin' Army
CONTINUED

101-120	5
121-172	4

Firestorm
DC, 1978

1	8
2	2
3	3
4-5	2

Firestorm Nuclear Man
DC, 1987

65-94	1
30-31	3
95-96	1
32	3
97-99	1
100	3
Ann 5	1

1st Issue Special
DC, 1975

1	7
2	5
3-5	4
7	5
8	15
➥Warlord	
9-12	4
13	5

Flaming Carrot Comics
AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, 1984

1	26
2	15
3	12
4	10
5-6	8
7	7
8-9	5
10-12	4
13-15	3
15/A-16	4
17-24	3
25	4
26-30/A	3
32	4
31	3
Ann 1	5

Flash
DC, 1959

105	6500
106	2000
107	1000
108	850
109	650
110	1500
➥1st Kid Flash	
111	450
112	600
➥1st Elong. Man	
113	550
114	275
115	350
116	250
117	300
118-120	250
121-122	200
123	1500
➥1st Earth-2	
124-128	150
129	325
➥GA Flash app.	
130	150
131-136	125
137	475
➥GA Flash app.	
138-140	125
141-142	150
143	125
144-150	100
151	80
152-153	65
154-158	60
159	75
160	90
➥Giant-size	
161-164	50
165	70
166-167	50
168	95
169	70
➥Origin of Flash	
170-174	50
175	175
➥Race w/Superman	
176-179	40
180	50
181-183	35
184	50
185-186	35
187	65
188-191	35
192-193	25
194	40
195	25
196	40
197-200	25
201-202	20
203	25
204	20
205	35
206	20
207-212	17
213	25
214	40
215	35
216-219	17
220-228	15
229	30
230-231	15
232	30
➥100-page issue	
233-237	10
238-245	7
246	12
247-262	7
263-273	4
274	5
275	7
276-288	4
289	5
290-299	3
300	5
301-304	3
305-306	4
307-349	3
350	7
Ann 1	400

Flash
DC, 1987

0	4
1	5
2-20	3
21-49	2
50	3
51-78	2
79	3
80	2
80/Variant	3
81-90	2
91	4
92	8
➥1st Impulse	
93	5
94-95	3
96-99	2
100	3
100/Variant	4
101-149	2
150	3
151-187	2
188	3
189-199	2
200	4
201-205	2
206-207	6
208	5
209	4
GS 1-2	5
Special 1	4
TV 1	4

Flash Comics
DC, 1940

1	70000
➥1st Flash, Hawkman	
2	8000
3	5500
4	4500
5	3500
6	5000
7	4500
8	3000
9-10	3250
11-20	2000
21-24	1600
25-40	1000
41-50	800
51-61	600
62	1000
➥Kubert Hawkman	
63-69	600
70-85	550
86	2250
➥1st Black Canary	
87	875
88-91	900

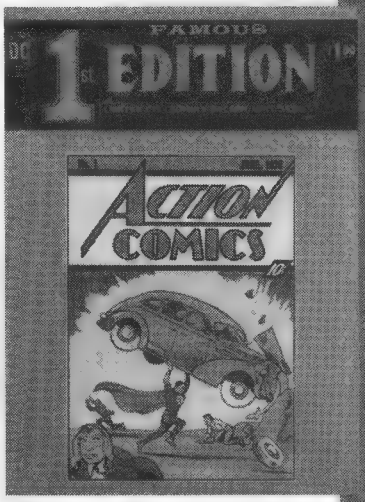
Haspel's Passing Grade

Just which comic book *is* it?

Certified Guaranty Company President, Primary Grader, and Pedigree Expert Mark Haspel and others on the CGC third-party-grading team have a challenging, detail-oriented job in front of them every day, as they identify the comic books sent to them for grading.

Haspel said certain aspects of identification are simple enough. "The fact of the matter is that we have the book in front of us. When we identify who drew and wrote the contents, we go by the credits as they are listed within the issue: What we say is what's in front of us. Moreover, there are some credits that are plain, obvious, and well known, and we'll provide that information on our label. Just because a credit isn't printed in the book doesn't mean it's not true. We use common sense on the labels — but, if we're not *sure*, it doesn't go on the label."

What is more of a challenge occurs when people sending in a comic book identify it wrong. "Somebody just sent in via our 'Walkthru' service, which carries a higher price because we have to handle it immediately, a copy of *Justice League* #1 from 1987." Sale of a CGC-graded copy, while it *might* bring $100-$200 in top condition, wouldn't justify the charges necessitated by Walkthru handling. Haspel told ***CBG***, "I don't know how you confuse *Justice League* #1 with *Justice League of America* #1 from 1960." (That issue probably brings in $2,000 or so in pristine shape.)



But there are a few comic books that present an ongoing challenge. ***CBG*** described one in its *Standard Catalog of Comic Books*: "*Famous First Edition*: In 1974, DC began publishing these giant-sized reprints of its most important Golden Age comics. Double-covered, the reprints reproduced the originals exactly, including the ads for automatic mouth organs, crystal radios, blank cartridge pistols, and other great comic-book ephemera. Once you removed the outer covers, the only real difference between the originals and the reprints was the size — the reprints were printed in tabloid size. Still, some con artists have tried to pass off coverless versions of these reprints as the (much smaller) originals."

This has been common knowledge in collecting circles for decades. "But," Haspel said, "we get calls and calls and *calls*: 'I have *Action* #1 and I didn't want to send it through the mails for you to grade.' We provide them the information and say, 'If it's *this* size, come on down. If it's plus or minus a quarter of an inch, *don't* come here!' Sometimes, you have to argue with people, they have so much hope that they have the 1938 original. It's unfortunate. DC, when it published the issue, didn't think that would happen.

"Quite honestly, I find it's common for people to be scammed by it. The interior cover says it's a reprint, but sometimes the con artist removes *both* covers, and people will spend $100, knowing that even a *coverless* actual *Action* #1 is worth far more than that. I find a disproportionate number of people fall for that."

So the scam hasn't ended? "It has not; we face it about once every three weeks.

"What's *really* heartbreaking is when they go to the trouble to show up with it at our offices. They'll say, 'But Grandpa told us he bought it when he was a child!' And all we can respond is, 'We *told* you not to come!' "

Grimm Fairy Tales: The Piper #3
Zenescope

$2.99, color, 30 pgs.
Writers: Mike Kaldova, Joe Brusha, Ralph Tedesco
Artists: Axel Medellin Machain
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★½

In a new, twisted take on The Pied Piper story, a trio of college students — Sean, Melanie, and Alberto — conjure the legendary figure, who wants their souls. It turns into a horror-movie chase, as Sean and company sprint away, with The Pied Piper calmly walking after them.

The story's pace is fast and never once slows down, as it heads to its conclusion next issue. It's cool to see The Pied Piper's origin story: a nice bonus. The art is solid. Hats off to small-press publisher Zenescope for finding artists who can give better-known creators a run for their money. Like most Zenescope sagas, this is a story best read in one setting.

www.zenescope.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Flash Comics CONTINUED
92. 3000
➥1st solo Bl. Canary
93. 700
94-99. 1000
100-103. . . 2500
➥Scarce
104. 7000

Fly Man ARCHIE, 1965
32. 32
33-34. 20
35-39. 16

Freddy vs. Jason vs. Ash DC, 2007
1. 12
2. 6
3-4. 4

Freedom Fighters DC, 1976
1. 12
2-3. 5
4-15. 4

Frontline Combat E.C., 1951
1. 535
2. 340
3. 250
4-5. 200
6-10. 150
11-15. 120

Fury of Firestorm DC, 1982
1. 6
2-10. 2
11-61. 1
61/A. 10
62-64. 1
Ann 1-4 2

George of the Jungle GOLD KEY, 1969
1. 35
2. 24

Ghost Rider MARVEL, 1973
1. 130
2. 37
3-4. 25
5. 23
6-14. 15
15-16. 12
17-19. 10
17-19/30¢ . . . 20
20. 10
21-23. 7
24-26. 8
24-26/35¢ . . . 15
27-30. 7
31-49. 6
50. 12
51-68. 5
69-80. 4
81. 10

Ghost Rider MARVEL, 1990
-1. 2
1. 4
2-6. 3
7-14. 2
15. 5
16-27. 2
28. 3
29-30. 2
31. 3
32-49. 2
50. 3
50/Variant 4
51-60. 2
61. 3
62-92. 2
93. 3
Ann 1. 4
Ann 2. 3

Ghosts DC, 1971
1. 100
2. 35
3-5. 17
6-10. 12
11-20. 10
21-30. 6
31-39. 5
40. 6
41-50. 5
51-70. 4
71-112. 3

Giant-Size Avengers MARVEL, 1974
1. 30
2. 25
3-4. 20
5. 15

... Captain America MARVEL
1. 20

... Captain Marvel MARVEL
1. 16

... Chillers MARVEL, 1974
1. 25
➥1st Lilith

... Chillers MARVEL, 1975
1. 20
2-3. 15

... Conan MARVEL, 1974
1. 16
2. 10
3. 7
4-5. 6

... Creatures MARVEL, 1974
1. 25

... Daredevil MARVEL, 1975
1. 15

... Defenders MARVEL, 1974
1. 20
2-3. 10
4-5. 7

... Doc Savage MARVEL, 1975
1. 10

... Doctor Strange MARVEL, 1975
1. 15

... Dracula MARVEL, 1974
2. 22
➥was GS Chillers
3-4. 15
5. 20
➥1st Marvel Byrne

... Fantastic Four MARVEL, 1974
1. 20
2. 12
3. 10
4. 12
5-6. 10

... Hulk MARVEL, 1975
1. 23

... Hulk MARVEL, 2006
1. 8

... Invaders MARVEL, 1975
1. 15
➥G.A. Subby origin

... Iron Man MARVEL, 1975
1. 17

... Kid Colt MARVEL, 1975
1. 27
2-3. 20

... Man-Thing MARVEL, 1974
1. 15
2. 9
3. 12
4. 10
5. 12

... Marvel Triple Action MARVEL, 1975
1. 15
2. 12

... Master of Kung Fu MARVEL, 1974
1. 17
2. 12
3-4. 10

... Power Man MARVEL, 1975
1. 20

... Spider-Man MARVEL, 1974
1. 35
2-3. 12
4. 45
➥Punisher app.
5. 12
6. 15

... Super-Heroes MARVEL, 1974
1. 25

... Super-Stars MARVEL, 1974
1. 20

... Super-Villain Team-Up MARVEL, 1975
1. 17
2. 10

... Thor MARVEL, 1975
1. 20

... Werewolf By Night MARVEL, 1974
2. 20
3-5. 15

... Wolverine MARVEL, 2006
1. 5

... X-Men MARVEL, 1975
1. 800
➥1st new X-Men
2. 80
3-4. 5

G.I. Combat DC, 1957
44. 500
45. 300
46. 250
47. 225
48-50. 100
51-54. 85
55. 125
56-60. 85
61-66. 70
67. 125
➥1st Tank Killer
68. 400
69-86. 70
87. 300
➥1st Haunted Tank
88-100. 55
101-110. 45
111-113. 38
114. 75
➥Haunted Tank origin
115-120. 28
121-140. 22
141-145. 8
146-150. 10
151-160. 8
161-180. 7
181-200. 5
201-250. 4
251-288. 3

G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero MARVEL, 1982
1. 14
2. 8
3-9. 4
10. 6
11-13. 4
14. 5
15-18. 4
19. 6
20. 4
21. 15
➥Silent issue
22-55. 4
56. 5
57. 3
58. 4
59-151. 3
152-154. 7
155. 16
➥Low circulation
YB 1. 3
YB 2-4 2
Special 1 20

Godzilla MARVEL, 1977
1. 12
1/35¢ 15
2. 6
2/35¢ 15
3. 5
3/35¢ 15
4-5. 5
6-10. 4
11-24. 3

Gomer Pyle GOLD KEY, 1966
1. 40
2-3. 25

Gorgo CHARLTON, 1961
1. 200
2-3. 100
4. 75
5. 50
6-10. 40
11-16. 30
17-23. 20

Great Comics GREAT COMICS, 1941
1. 500
2. 285
3. 660
➥Hitler story

Green Arrow DC, 1988
0. 3
1. 4
2-20. 2
21. 3
22-49. 2
50. 3
51-74. 2
75. 3
76-95. 2
96-99. 3
100. 7
101. 18
➥Death of O. Queen
102-124. 2
125. 4
126-136. 3
137. 4
1000000. 3
Ann 1-7 4

Green Arrow DC, 2001
1-2. 6
3-42. 3
43. 7
➥Speedy HIV
44. 4
45-49. 3
50. 4
51-75. 3

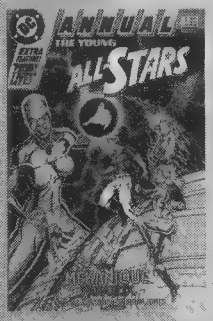
Green Lama SPARK, 1944
1. 750
2. 475
3. 340
4-5. 240
6-8. 180

Green Lantern DC, 1941
1. 37500
➥Grn Lantern origin
2. 7500
3. 5500
4. 4000
5. 2750
6. 2250
7-10. 2000
11-20. 1500
21-30. 1250
31-34. 1000
35-38. 1250

Green Lantern DC, 1960
1. 4500
➥1st Guardians
2. 1000

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars Annual #1 ★★★



DC
1988
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils and Inks: Various
Cover: Michael Bair

"The Mekanique Paradox" • 33 pp.

Mekanique and Per Degaton's plans to destroy The All-Star Squadron are thwarted by The Young All-Stars.

It took nearly two years, but Mekanique's evil schemes are finally brought down in this first (and only) *Young All-Stars Annual.* The story "continues" in *Infinity Inc. Annual* #2, which we'll get to in an upcoming set of Retroviews.

Parts of the story are heavy-handed, but it all turns out all right in the end.

"Home Front" • 8 pp.

Danny "Dyna-Mite" Dunbar pays a visit home.

It's a totally unnecessary back-up.

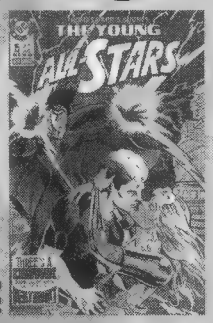
30 ©

No CGC copies

Then $2 NOW $2

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #15 ★★★★



DC
Aug 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Harris

No CGC Series

"... and Deathbolt Makes Three!"

The Young All-Stars' studying is interrupted by an attack from Deathbolt.

A neat Done in One story lets readers see further into the lives of The Young All-Stars. Watching the romance grown between Fury and "Iron" Munro has been fun, and Roy and Dann Thomas' insertion of a real-life concern into that situation makes for a more realistic story. Munro's grousing about having to finish school more than likely hit close to home for some readers, as did some of his other decisions.

Ron Harris' art is eye-catching and appealing, especially a horizontal panel with Fury winding up to hit Deathbolt.

Then $1.25 NOW $1

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
182	18
183	25
184	18
185	30
186	75
➥Wrightson art	
187	20
188	30
189-190	20
191	25
192	20
193	25
194	30
195	45
➥Wrightson swamp man	
196-201	20
202-203	14
204	20
205-206	12
207	40
➥Wrightson art	
208	12
209-213	10
214-220	6
221	12
222-223	6
224	35
225-226	18
227	27
228-229	18
230-250	5
251-259	4
260-321	3

House of Secrets
DC, 1956

1	1500
2	550
3	450
4	350
5-7	200
8	230
9-12	200
13-15	125
16-20	110
21	85
22	80
23	100
➥1st Mark Merlin	
24-30	80
31-50	65
51-60	52
61	125
➥1st Eclipso	
62	60
63-65	50
66	65
➥Eclipso cover	
67	40
68-79	36
80	45
81	55
➥1st Abel	
82-84	20
85	32
86	20
87	45
➥Wrightson art	
88-91	40
92	450
➥1st Swamp Thing	
93-99	25
100	27
101-112	18
113-141	10
142-154	7

Howard the Duck
MARVEL, 1976

1	15
2	5
3	4
3/30¢	20
4	2
4/30¢	20
5-11	2
12	7
13	5
13/35¢	15
14-17	2
14-17/35¢	15
18-32	2
33	3
Ann 1	4

Hulk
MARVEL, 1978
➥Magazine

10-21	7
22-27	5

Hulk
MARVEL, 1999

1	4
1/A	5
1/Gold	4
2-11	3

Hulk
MARVEL, 2008

1	6
2	4
3	3

Human Torch
MARVEL, 1940

1	32000
2	7400
3	4800
4	3400
5	4650
6-7	2100
8	3400
9	2100
10	2750
11-15	1850
3	600
4-5	450
6	400
7-10	300
11-12	200
13	250
14-16	175
17-20	150
21-27	125
28-30	100
31-39	75
40	350
➥GA Lantern app.	
41-49	75
50-51	60
52	80
53-58	55
59	125
➥1st Guy Gardner	
60-75	50
76	375
➥Green Arrow starts	
77-78	75
79-84	60
85	50
86	60
➥Drug issue	
87	50
88	30
89	45
90-92	10
93-99	9
100	10
101	9
102-111	4
112	8
113-115	3
116	8
117-121	3
122	4
123	6
124-130	3
131-135	2
136-139	3
140	2
141	5
➥1st Omega Men	
142-144	3
145-149	2
150	5
151-173	2
174	3
175-178	2
179	3
180-193	2
194	3
195	4
196-205	2
Special 1-2	3

Green Lantern
DC, 1990

0	4
1	7
2	3
3-26	2
27-45	1
46	4
47	2
48-50	5
51	3
52-80	2
81	3
81/Variant	4
82-99	2
100/A	5
100/Autographed	4
100/B	3
101-149	2
150	4
151-174	2
175	4
176	8
177	4
178-181	2
1000000	3
Ann 1-9	4
Ann 1963	6
GS 1-2	5
GS 3	6
3D 1	5
3D 1/Ltd.	17

Green Lantern
DC, 2005

1	6
2	4
3-24	3
25	5
26-27	3

Grendel
COMICO, 1983

1	45
2	35
3	26

Grendel
COMICO, 1986

1	5
2-5	4
6-15	3
16	4
17-32	3
33	4
34-39	3
40	4

Harbinger
VALIANT, 1992

0	6
0/Pink	65
1	30
2-3	8
4	11
5	10
6	9
7	7
8-10	4
11	2
12-28	1
29	2
30-34	1
35	2
36-38	1
39	3
40	4
41	5

Harvey
MARVEL, 1970

1	50
2	18
3	8
4-6	6

Haunt of Fear
E.C., 1950

1	2750
2-3	1000
4	750

Haunt of Fear
CONTINUED

5	550
6	425
7-9	400
10	375
11-13	300
14	450
15-18	300
19	375
20	300
21-28	250

Haunt of Horror
MARVEL, 1974

1	8
2	6
3-5	5

Hawkman
DC, 1964

1	475
2	200
3	75
4	200
➥1st Zatanna	
5-9	65
10-12	50
13-15	40
16-19	36
20-27	32

Herbie
ACG, 1964

1	95
2	60
3-5	48
6-7	40
8	50
9-10	38
11-23	30

House of Mystery
DC, 1951

1	2000
2	850
3	600
4-5	450
6-10	350
11-15	300
16-25	220
26-35	170
36-50	140
51-61	95
62	70
63	85
64	70
65	85
66-69	70
70	85
71-75	65
76	85
77-79	65
80-83	54
84-85	85
86-99	54
100	65
101-116	45
117-119	35
120	45
121-130	28
131-142	22
143	175
➥J'onn J'onzz starts	
144	75
145-155	50
156	75
➥1st Robby Reed	
157-159	50
160	90
➥1st S.A. Plastic Man	
161	35
162-173	32
174	50
175	45
176-177	24
178	45
➥N. Adams art	
179	60
➥1st Wrightson art	
180-181	25

Original Art

Comic and Animation Art

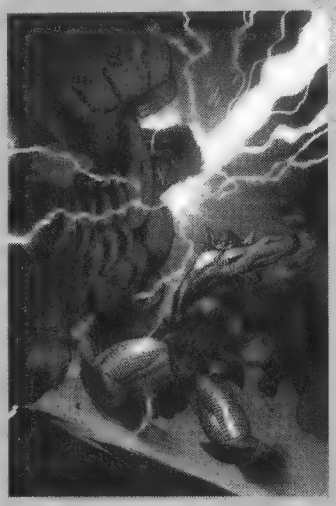
Collecting old art catalogs

Before the days of Internet sites and Web pages, original art was sold (outside of comic-book shows) in two main venues: ads in ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** and mail-order catalogs. This older material can be useful for identifying what art exists. Most originals were preserved after 1970, when art was returned to the artist. The existence of earlier art varies greatly, and, since art often disappears into collections for decades, early ads and catalogs are important clues regarding what may still be around.

Many of the ***CBG*** ads with images of art have been posted for reference purposes in the news section of *www.comicartfans.com*. The catalogs, however, are not reproduced anywhere. They vary in style from the slick books produced by Sotheby's, Russ Cochran, Illustration House, Tony Dispoto, and Jim Steranko to a wide range of photocopied (or even mimeographed) lists. Some (but not all) of the dealers producing lists or catalogs in the 1970s through the late 1990s were Collector's Bookstore, Richard Halegua, Mitch Itkowitz, Bruce Bergstrom, Dick Commer, Stu Reisbord, Bill Thailing, Lee Roberts, The Cartoon Museum (Jim Ivey), Roger McClennan, and Bill Pearson, among others.

Some of the lists reproduced the art for sale, while others just listed the art for sale or trade.

— George Hagenauer



Hulk #5
Marvel

$2.99, color, 80 pgs.
Writer: Jeph Loeb
Artist: Ed McGuinness
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★

It's Thor vs. Red Hulk in an unbelievable, over-the-top battle. Ed McGuinness' fantastic art saves this review from zero stars. Red Hulk and Thor fight in space, where Red Hulk believes Odin's enchantment (that only Thor is worthy enough to lift his hammer, Mjolnir) doesn't extend to zero-gravity environments. And he's right. Red Hulk beats Thor silly with Mjolnir and even flies around with it.

No way!

Odin's enchantment on Mjolnir extends to zero gravity and other planes of reality — even when he's dead. It's about *worthiness*, not weight. There's no *way* Red Hulk could beat Thor (who has the Odin-power, no less) this way. Moreover, these Hulk (green or red)-vs.-the-entire-Marvel-Universe fights are tiresome, especially so soon after "World War Hulk." All the new *Hulk* book has is battle after battle. We're still no closer to learning Red Hulk's identity or how Rick Jones became A-Bomb.

Without question, Jeph Loeb is a brilliant writer, but sometimes it seems his weaker work is for Marvel.

www.marvel.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Human Torch CONTINUED
16-20 . . . 1250
21-30 . . . 1025
31-38 . . . 850

Incredible Hulk MARVEL, 1962
-1 . . . 2
1 . . . 13000
➥1st Hulk
2 . . . 3500
3 . . . 2000
4-5 . . . 1750
6 . . . 2250
102 . . . 150
103 . . . 100
104 . . . 75
105 . . . 70
106-112 . . . 50
113-115 . . . 40
116-121 . . . 35
122 . . . 55
➥Thing vs. Hulk
123-125 . . . 30
126-130 . . . 25
131 . . . 30
132 . . . 25
133 . . . 20
134-136 . . . 16
➥Harlan Ellison
➥1st Doc Samson
137-151 . . . 20
152 . . . 25
153-160 . . . 20
161 . . . 30
162 . . . 55
➥1st Wendigo
163-171 . . . 15
172 . . . 25
➥X-Men app.
173-176 . . . 15
177-178 . . . 17
179 . . . 16
180 . . . 180
➥Wolverine cameo
181 . . . 750
➥1st Wolverine story
181/Ace . . . 5
182 . . . 100
➥2nd Wolverine
183 . . . 12
184-190 . . . 10
191-198 . . . 8
198/30¢ . . . 20
199 . . . 8
199/30¢ . . . 20
200 . . . 11
200/30¢ . . . 30
201 . . . 7
201/30¢ . . . 20
202 . . . 7
202/30¢ . . . 20
203-212 . . . 7
212/35¢ . . . 15
213 . . . 7
213/35¢ . . . 15
214 . . . 7
214/35¢ . . . 15
215 . . . 7
215/35¢ . . . 15
216 . . . 7
216/35¢ . . . 15
217-218 . . . 7
219-240 . . . 5
241-249 . . . 4
250 . . . 7
251-285 . . . 3
286 . . . 4
287-295 . . . 3
296 . . . 5
297 . . . 4
298-299 . . . 3
300 . . . 4
301-319 . . . 3
320-323 . . . 2
324 . . . 5
325 . . . 3
326 . . . 4
327-328 . . . 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

329 . . . 2
➥1st McFarlane
330-334 . . . 5
335 . . . 2
336-339 . . . 3
340 . . . 14
➥vs. Wolverine
341 . . . 4
342-349 . . . 2
350 . . . 5
➥1st Dale Keown
351-371 . . . 2
372 . . . 3
373-376 . . . 2
377-378 . . . 3
379-384 . . . 2
385 . . . 4
386 . . . 3
387-391 . . . 2
392 . . . 3
393 . . . 4
394 . . . 3
395-399 . . . 2
400 . . . 3
401-418 . . . 2
418/Variant . . . 3
419-425 . . . 2
425/Variant . . . 4
426-448 . . . 2
449 . . . 8
450 . . . 5
451-474 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 115
Ann 2 . . . 40
Ann 3-4 . . . 25
Ann 5 . . . 9
Ann 6 . . . 7
Ann 7 . . . 9
Ann 8 . . . 5
Ann 9 . . . 3
Ann 10 . . . 4
Ann 11-19 . . . 3
Ann 20 . . . 4
Ann '97-'98 . . . 3
Ashcan 1 . . . 1

Incredible Hulk MARVEL, 1999
➥Cont'd from Hulk
12-20 . . . 3
21-24 . . . 2
25 . . . 3
26-33 . . . 2
34 . . . 13
➥Bruce Jones starts
35 . . . 6
36-38 . . . 5
39-41 . . . 4
42-46 . . . 3
47-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 5
51 . . . 4
52-54 . . . 3
55-63 . . . 2
64 . . . 3
65-66 . . . 2
67-72 . . . 3
73-74 . . . 2
75-76 . . . 4
77-82 . . . 3
83 . . . 5
83/2nd . . . 4
84 . . . 3
84/2nd . . . 4
85-91 . . . 3
92 . . . 25
93-99 . . . 3
100/Both . . . 4
101-112 . . . 3
Ann 1999 . . . 5
Ann 2000 . . . 4
Ann 2001 . . . 3

Iron Fist MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 35
2 . . . 12
3 . . . 10
4 . . . 8
4/30¢ . . . 20
5 . . . 8

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #16 ★★★½

DC
Sep 1988 • 25 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Michael Bair
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Bair

"The Dzyan Inheritance, Part 1: Leviathan!"

Neptune Perkins' origins are revealed in a story that begins with a Nazi invasion of an Arctic stronghold.

Combining elements of stories from Edgar Allan Poe and Jules Verne, among other sources, Roy and Dann Thomas spin a terrific origin for Neptune Perkins, a Golden Age character that few readers were familiar with before.

While other stories, including a novel by Kevin J. Anderson, also tie previously unrelated stories together into one overarching tale, the Thomases do an outstanding job, as always. It's another fine example of retroactive continuity.

30 ⊕

No Ent. comics.
Then $1.25 NOW $1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

5/30¢ . . . 20
6 . . . 8
6/30¢ . . . 20
7-13 . . . 8
13/35¢ . . . 10
14 . . . 80
➥1st Sabretooth
14/35¢ . . . 150
15 . . . 27
15/35¢ . . . 75

Ironjaw ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975
1 . . . 9
2-3 . . . 6
4 . . . 8

Iron Man MARVEL, 1968
1 . . . 365
2 . . . 75
3-4 . . . 60
5 . . . 55
6-7 . . . 50
8 . . . 40
9 . . . 90
10 . . . 42
11-12 . . . 35
13-17 . . . 27
18-20 . . . 25
21-30 . . . 20
31-40 . . . 15
41-42 . . . 12
43 . . . 35
➥1st Guardsman
44 . . . 12
45-46 . . . 15
47 . . . 35
➥Barry Smith art
48-50 . . . 12
51 . . . 17
52-53 . . . 10
54 . . . 16
55 . . . 110
➥1st Thanos
56-67 . . . 15
68-97 . . . 10
85-89/30¢ . . . 20
98-99 . . . 8
99/35¢ . . . 15
100 . . . 12
100/35¢ . . . 18
101 . . . 7
101/35¢ . . . 12
102 . . . 7
102/35¢ . . . 12
103 . . . 7
103/35¢ . . . 12
➥Alcoholism issue
104-129 . . . 7
130-149 . . . 5
150 . . . 7

UNSLABBED Near Mint

151-153 . . . 5
154 . . . 7
155-159 . . . 5
160 . . . 7
161-170 . . . 5
171-181 . . . 3
182 . . . 4
183-185 . . . 3
186 . . . 4
187-191 . . . 3
192 . . . 4
193-200 . . . 3
201-224 . . . 2
225-232/A . . . 3
233-243 . . . 2
244 . . . 3
245-250 . . . 2
251-257 . . . 1
258-280 . . . 2
281-282 . . . 3
283-284 . . . 2
285-287 . . . 1
288 . . . 3
289 . . . 1
290 . . . 4
291-299 . . . 1
300 . . . 3
300/Variant . . . 4
301-304 . . . 1
305-310 . . . 2
310/CS . . . 3
311-316 . . . 2
317 . . . 3
318-324 . . . 2
325 . . . 3
326-332 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 27
Ann 2 . . . 20
Ann 3 . . . 10
Ann 4 . . . 4
Ann 5-10 . . . 3
Ann 11-13 . . . 2
Ann 14-15 . . . 3
Ashcan 1 . . . 2

Iron Man MARVEL, 1996
1-1/A . . . 3
2-11 . . . 2
12 . . . 4
13 . . . 3

Iron Man MARVEL, 1998
1-1/A . . . 4
2 . . . 2
2/Variant . . . 3
3-12 . . . 2
13 . . . 3
13/Autographed 4
14-45 . . . 2
46 . . . 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

47-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 3
51-66 . . . 2
67-83 . . . 3
84 . . . 8
85 . . . 5
86-89 . . . 3
Ann '98-'00 . . . 4
Ann 2001 . . . 3

Iron Man & Sub-Mariner MARVEL, 1968
1 . . . 100

I Spy GOLD KEY, 1966
1 . . . 55
2 . . . 40
3-6 . . . 33

Jamboree Comics ROUND, 1946
1 . . . 70
2-3 . . . 35

Jingle Jangle Comics EASTERN COLOR, 1943
1 . . . 225
2 . . . 200
3 . . . 175
4 . . . 150
5-6 . . . 125
7-9 . . . 100
10-12 . . . 80
13-15 . . . 75
16-18 . . . 60
19-25 . . . 50
26-29 . . . 45
30-35 . . . 40
36-39 . . . 35
40-42 . . . 30

JLA DC, 1997
1 . . . 6
2-6 . . . 4
7-15 . . . 3
16-40 . . . 2
41 . . . 3
42-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 4
51-74 . . . 2
75 . . . 4
76-99 . . . 2
100 . . . 4
101-108 . . . 3
➥Post ID Crisis
109-114 . . . 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

115 . . . 12
➥ID Crisis follow-up
116 . . . 5
117-125 . . . 3
1000000 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 6
Ann 2 . . . 5
Ann 3 . . . 4
GS 1-2 . . . 5
GS 3 . . . 6

JLA/ Avengers MARVEL, 2003
1 . . . 7
3 . . . 6
3/2nd . . . 7

Joe Palooka HARVEY, 1945
1 . . . 240
2 . . . 160
3-4 . . . 90
5 . . . 135
➥Simon/Kirby issue
6-7 . . . 95
8-10 . . . 75
11-14 . . . 55
15 . . . 75
➥Humphrey origin
16-20 . . . 55
21-30 . . . 44
31-44 . . . 38
45-51 . . . 32
52-60 . . . 28
61 . . . 26
62 . . . 42
63-80 . . . 26
81-115 . . . 24
116-118 . . . 34

John Carter, Warlord of Mars MARVEL, 1977
1 . . . 8
1/35¢ . . . 15
2 . . . 4
2/35¢ . . . 8
3-5 . . . 3
3-5/35¢ . . . 8
6-28 . . . 3
Ann 1-3 . . . 2

Johnny Thunder DC, 1973
1 . . . 12
2-3 . . . 8

Joker DC, 1975
1 . . . 16

Young All-Stars #17 ★★★

"The Dzyan Inheritance, Part 2: Neptune!"

Neptune Perkins learns more of his origins and then heads for the Dzyan's floating Arctic fortress, only to be captured by the Nazis.

The ties of family are strongly emphasized in this part of the four-part story, with Neptune Perkins recalling his early life and being told of other events that affected it.

More elements of the Golden Age Aquaman's powers and abilities are given to the character, since, of course, that version of Aquaman doesn't exist in the post-*Crisis* DC universe.

Was anyone really surprised by the turn of events at issue's end?

DC
Oct 1988 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Michael Bair
Inks: Tony DeZuniga
Cover: Bair

¼ CBG copies
Then $1.25 NOW $1

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2	12
3-5	8
6-9	7

Jonah Hex
DC, 1977

1	28
2	10
3-5	7
6	6
7-8	7
9-10	5
11-20	4
21-92	3

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1952

-1	2
1	3100
2	950
3-4	700
5	800
6-11	450
12-22	350
23-32	225
33	250
34-40	225
41-49	200
50	160
51-61	155
62	250
63-71	145
72	140
73	200
74-81	140
82	160
83	4500
➥1st Thor	
83/Golden	60
84	725
85	450
86	400
87	600
88	250
89	300
90	150
91-92	130
93	160
94-96	130
97	325
98	120
99	105
100	115
101	150
102-108	75
109	90
110-111	75
112	210
➥Thor vs. Hulk	
113-114	75
115	90
116	75
117-125	70
503-521	2
Ann 1	150

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1972

1	17
2-3	7
4-5	6
6-19	5

JSA
DC, 1999

1	5
2-36	3
37	4
38-49	3
50	4
51-57	3
58	4
59-66	3
67	7
➥Identity Crisis tie	
68	5
69-70	4
71	3
72	4
73	5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
74	4
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
75-87	3
Ann 1	5

Judomaster
CHARLTON, 1966

89	12
90-98	9

Jungle Action
MARVEL, 1972

1	15
2-4	7
5	35
➥Black Panther	
6	12
7	8
8	15
9	7
10-16	6
17-21	5
21/30¢	20
22	5
22/30¢	20
23-24	5

Jungle Comics
FICTION HOUSE, 1940

1	4000
2	1500
3-4	1250
5	1500
6	650
7	600
8-10	545
11-15	475
16-20	425
21-25	370
26-30	340
31-35	290
36-40	250
41-50	215
51-60	200
61-70	180
71-80	165
81-90	150
91-97	140
98	210
99-100	140
101-110	130
111-130	125
131-150	115
151-163	100

Jungle Jim
STANDARD, 1949

11	60
12-15	40
16-20	35

Jungle Jim
DELL, 1954

3	30
4-9	25
10-19	20

Justice League
DC, 1987

1	6
2-3	3
3/Ltd.	10
4-6	2
Ann 1	3

Justice League America
DC, 1989

0-50	2
51-68	1
69	3
70-99	2
100	3
100/Variant	4
101-113	2
Ann 4-8	3
Ann 9	4
Ann 10	3
Special 1	2
Special 2	3
SP 1/Both	2

Justice League of America
DC, 1960

1	5000
2	1250
3	1000
4	700
5	600
6-8	400
9	1000
➥JLA origin	
10	400
11-15	250
16-20	225
21	350
➥Earth-2 visit	
22	325
23-30	150
31	100
32-33	90
34-36	75
➥Supes vs. Cap. Mrv.	
37-39	125
40-41	75
42-45	60
➥1st SA Sandman	
46	110
➥JSA app.	
47	95
48	140
➥Giant issue	
49-52	60
53-54	55
55	115
56	100
➥JSA team-up	
57-62	55
63-66	45
67	60
➥Giant	
68	50
69-72	45
➥Giant	
73-81	35
82	45
➥G.A. Batman app.	
83-84	30
85	40
➥Giant	
86-90	25
91	35
92	32
93	25
➥Giant	
94	60
➥Sandman origin	
95-99	20
100	65
101-106	20
107-108	25
109	20
110-116	25
117-125	15
126-136	10
137	20
138-150	7
151-165	5
166-167	12
168	25
➥Mindwipe story	
169-199	5
200	7
201-217	3
218	4
219	3
220	4
221-226	3
227	4
228-260	3
261	4
Ann 1	5
Ann 2-3	4

Kamandi Last Boy on Earth
DC, 1972

1	20
2	15
3	10
4-10	8
11-19	7
20-38	6
39-40	5
41-54	4
55-58	3
59	4

Kid Colt Outlaw
MARVEL, 1948

1	665
2	335
3-5	250
6-10	175
11	225
12-20	150
21-30	105
31-40	90
41-50	80
51-60	65
61-70	48
71-100	40
101-110	28
111-120	18
121-130	14
131-139	10
140-170	5
171-200	4
201-205	3
205/30¢	20
206-219	3
219/35¢	15
220	3
220/35¢	15
221-229	3

Kid Eternity
QUALITY, 1946

1	560
2	290
3	250
4-5	175
6-10	135
11-18	105

Kingdom Come
DC, 1996

1-4	5

King Kong
GOLD KEY, 1968

1	12

Korak, Son of Tarzan
GOLD KEY, 1964

1	65
2-5	45
6-11	30
12-18	25
19-37	20
38-46	17
47-51	15
52-59	10

Kull and the Barbarians
MARVEL, 1975

1	16
2	4
3	5

Kull the Conqueror
MARVEL, 1971

1	20
2	12
3-4	8
5	7
6-10	5

Kull the Destroyer
MARVEL, 1973

11-16	2
16/30¢	20
17-21	2
21/35¢	15
22	2
22/35¢	15
23	2
23/35¢	15
24-29	2

Lancelot Link, Secret Chimp
GOLD KEY, 1971

1	30
2	17
3-8	10

Land of the Giants
GOLD KEY, 1968

1	30
2	18
3-5	15

Laurel and Hardy
DELL, 1962

-210	30
2-4	20

Leading Comics
DC, 1941

1	3500
2	1100
3	850
4-5	675
6-10	580
11-15	440
16-22	70
23	110
24-30	55
31-41	40

L.E.G.I.O.N.
DC, 1989

1	3
2-22	2
23	3
24-49	2
50	4
51-69	2
70	3
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-3	3
Ann 4-5	4

Legion
DC, 2001

1-24	3
25	4
26-38	3

Legionnaires
DC, 1993

0	2
1	3
2-49	2
50	4
51-64	2
65-80	3
1000000	4
Ann 1	5
Ann 2	4
Ann 3	3

Legion of Monsters
MARVEL

1	35

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1973

1	15
2	8
3-4	7

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1980

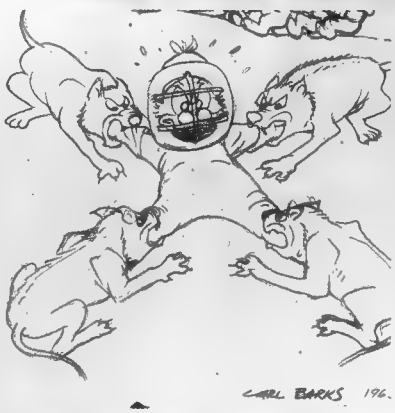
259	4
260-270	3
271-284	2
285	3
286-296	2
297	3
298-309	2
310	3
311-313	2
Ann 1	3
Ann 2-3	2

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1984

1	5
2-5	4

Original Art

The Carl Barks Estate



Highlights of 2008 included several Jerry Weist eBay auctions of the last material from the Carl Barks estate. The auction included comic books, ephemera, and dozens of pieces of original art. The art did not include any major published Disney pieces. There were, however, lots of Disney prelims of all types, gag cartoon art from various magazines, illustrations, and even landscape paintings.

Compared to the price of published Disney pages (which have sold recently in the $15,000 to $25,000 range) or Barks' major Disney Duck paintings (which have crested $100,000), the art offered from the estate sold in the hundreds of dollars — usually more than $400 for Disney-related pieces and under for non-Disney related. There were a few pieces including dedication pieces to Carl by European artists that went for more than $1,000. For the most part, the art, including a number of multiple-piece lots, went at prices that many collectors could afford. This is not uncommon, when an estate first comes on the market.

Some of the art was bought by dealers or speculators and has already appeared for resale through auction houses or websites. The prices, while higher than last year's eBay auctions, are still in the affordable range and may provide the last chance to pick up a piece of art by Barks at an affordable price.

*— **George Hagenauer** reports on the original art market for **CBG**. Write him at **yellowkd@merr.com**.*

Jonah Hex #37
DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writers: Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray; Artist: Jordi Bernet
reviewed by **Michael Tierney**

★★½

As anyone who's ever read a *Jonah Hex* comic book already knows, about the only time the mutilated Civil War veteran picks up a girl is to throw her over his shoulder and haul her somewhere.

This issue shows the romantic side of Jonah Hex, when he encounters a trio of female bounty hunters who've quit the local circus. Even though "sensitive" for Jonah is still "rough" by most standards, does this grizzled loner stand a chance, when confronted by a combination of beauty and beguilement?

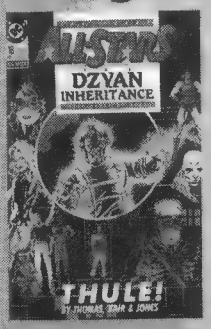
Artist Jordi Bernet is at his best while serving up a bevy of Wild West charmers. The moody environment he creates is evocative of spaghetti Westerns of the '60s.

Given the experience of the creative team, it's surprising that the multiple scene and character shifts are not always as effective as might be expected. There are points at which the flow of the story relies on the reader's filling in too many of the details. This issue had elements of a great story but just missed the mark.

www.dccomics.com

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #18
★★★



"The Dzyan Inheritance, Part 3: Thule!"

Nazi scientist Thule absorbs the force of the Vril, while The Young All-Stars invade the Dzyan's fortress, only to be captured themselves.

As if there couldn't be any more literary references in this story arc, Thule makes reference to Madame Blavatasky's "works" (possibly apocryphal), the crackpot theories of Hans Horbiger, and hollow Earth stories. It only goes to prove what a total nutcase he is.

At issue's end, Roy and Dann Thomas even manage to bring in another 19th century literary creation.

DC
Nov 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Michael Bair

No CGC copies

Then $1.25 NOW $1

UNLABBED Near Mint

Legion of Super-Heroes CONTINUED
6-36 . . . 2
37-38 . . . 5
39-44 . . . 2
45 . . . 3
46-63 . . . 2
Ann 1 . . . 3
Ann 2-3 . . . 2
Ann 4 . . . 3

Legion of Super-Heroes DC, 1989
0 . . . 2
1 . . . 3
2-37 . . . 2
38 . . . 3
39-49 . . . 2
50 . . . 4
51-53 . . . 2
54 . . . 3
55-99 . . . 2
100 . . . 6
101-108 . . . 2
109-123 . . . 3
1000000 . . . 4
Ann 1 . . . 5
Ann 2-6 . . . 4
Ann 7 . . . 3

Liberty Comics GREEN, 1945
5-9 . . . 125
10-15 . . . 90

Limited Collectors' Edition DC, 1973
C-20 . . . 32
➥Rudolph
C-21 . . . 16
C-22 . . . 14
C-23 . . . 16
C-24 . . . 26
➥Rudolph
C-25 . . . 28
➥Batman
C-27 . . . 16
C-29 . . . 10
C-31 . . . 15
C-32 . . . 10
C-33 . . . 16
C-34 . . . 12
C-35 . . . 10
C-36 . . . 16
C-37 . . . 20
➥Batman
C-38-C-39 . . . 10
C-40 . . . 12
C-41-C-43 . . . 10
C-44 . . . 12
C-45-C-47 . . . 10
C-48 . . . 12
C-49-C-50 . . . 10
C-51 . . . 12
C-52 . . . 10
C-57-C-59 . . . 14

Little Audrey HARVEY, 1945
25 . . . 125
26-29 . . . 75
30-40 . . . 50
41-53 . . . 40

Little Dot HARVEY, 1953
1 . . . 1250
2 . . . 500
3 . . . 400
4-5 . . . 325
6 . . . 400
7 . . . 200
8-10 . . . 125
11-20 . . . 100
21-30 . . . 60
31-40 . . . 45
41-50 . . . 25
51-60 . . . 20
61-80 . . . 15
81-100 . . . 10
101-141 . . . 7
142-145 . . . 10
146-164 . . . 5

Little Lulu DELL, 1948
1 . . . 600
2 . . . 300
3 . . . 225
4-5 . . . 200
6-10 . . . 165
11-20 . . . 125
21-30 . . . 105
31-38 . . . 90
39 . . . 125
40 . . . 90
41-50 . . . 70
51-60 . . . 60
61-70 . . . 55
71-80 . . . 45
81-90 . . . 40
91-99 . . . 35
100 . . . 50
101-120 . . . 30
121-140 . . . 28
141-160 . . . 25
161-164 . . . 20
➥...In Paris
165-166 . . . 70
➥Christmas Diary
167-180 . . . 20
181-200 . . . 15
201-220 . . . 9
221-240 . . . 6
241-250 . . . 4
251-257 . . . 3
258-259 . . . 12
260 . . . 325
➥Sold only in packs
261 . . . 45
➥Sold only in packs
262-265 . . . 12
➥Sold only in packs
266-268 . . . 15
➥Sold only in packs

Lobo DC, 1990
1 . . . 3
2-4 . . . 2

Lobo DC, 1993
0 . . . 3
1 . . . 4
2-10 . . . 3
11-55 . . . 2
56-64 . . . 3
1000000 . . . 4
Ann 1 . . . 5
Ann 2-Ann 3 . . . 4

Logan's Run MARVEL, 1977
1 . . . 5
2-5 . . . 2
6 . . . 4
6/35¢ . . . 15
7 . . . 2
7/35¢ . . . 5

Loki MARVEL, 2004
1 . . . 12
2 . . . 6
3-4 . . . 4

Lone Ranger DELL, 1948
1 . . . 660
2 . . . 360
3 . . . 265
4-5 . . . 230
6-7 . . . 195
8 . . . 275
➥Lone Ranger origin
9-10 . . . 195
11-20 . . . 138
21-30 . . . 100
31-40 . . . 75
41-50 . . . 58
51-60 . . . 50
61-70 . . . 48
71-80 . . . 38
81-100 . . . 34
101-111 . . . 30
112 . . . 55
113-117 . . . 45
118 . . . 50
119-145 . . . 45

Lone Wolf and Cub FIRST, 1987
1 . . . 6
2-3 . . . 4
4-38 . . . 3
39 . . . 6
➥Giant-size
40 . . . 3
41-49 . . . 4

Love & Rockets FANTAGRAPHICS, 2001
1 . . . 6
2-9 . . . 4
10 . . . 6
11-15 . . . 5

Lucifer DC, 2000
1 . . . 4
2-49 . . . 3
50 . . . 4
51-74 . . . 3
75 . . . 4

Machine Man MARVEL, 1978
1 . . . 3
2-18 . . . 2
➥Alpha Flight app.
19 . . . 13
➥1st Jack O'Lantern

Mad E.C., 1952
1 . . . 5000
2 . . . 1250
3 . . . 725
4 . . . 700
5 . . . 1200
➥Low distribution
6-11 . . . 525
12-19 . . . 425
20-23 . . . 300
24 . . . 785
➥1st magazine issue
25 . . . 300
26-27 . . . 250
28-29 . . . 225
30 . . . 350
31 . . . 200
32 . . . 175
33 . . . 165
34-35 . . . 140
36-40 . . . 110
41-50 . . . 80
51-60 . . . 60
61-70 . . . 48
71-80 . . . 36
81-100 . . . 32
101-120 . . . 18
121 . . . 22
122 . . . 18
123-140 . . . 15
141-150 . . . 12
151-160 . . . 9
161-170 . . . 8
171-189 . . . 7
190-200 . . . 5
201-220 . . . 4
221-260 . . . 3
261-342 . . . 2
343-417 . . . 3
418-473 . . . 4

Magnus, Robot Fighter GOLD KEY, 1963
1 . . . 200
2-3 . . . 125
4-10 . . . 60
11-20 . . . 35
21-28 . . . 20
29-45 . . . 10
45/Whitman . . . 18
46 . . . 10

Magnus Robot Fighter VALIANT, 1991
0/card . . . 40
0/no card . . . 30
1 . . . 10
2 . . . 8
3-4 . . . 5
➥Flip-book w/Rai #1
5-6 . . . 6
7-8 . . . 4
9-10 . . . 3
11 . . . 6
12 . . . 20
➥1st Valiant Turok
13-16 . . . 3
17-21 . . . 2
21/Gold . . . 20
22-25 . . . 2
25/VVSS . . . 15
26-35 . . . 1
36 . . . 2
37-43 . . . 1
44 . . . 3
45-54 . . . 2
55-57 . . . 3
57/error . . . 10
58-60 . . . 3
61-62 . . . 4
63 . . . 5
64 . . . 12
YB 1 . . . 5

Man from U.N.C.L.E. GOLD KEY, 1965
1 . . . 150
2 . . . 75
3-5 . . . 50
6-20 . . . 35
21-22 . . . 25

Man-Thing MARVEL, 1974
1 . . . 30
2 . . . 14
3 . . . 10
4 . . . 8
5 . . . 10
6-10 . . . 5
11-22 . . . 3

M.A.R.S. Patrol Total War GOLD KEY, 1966
3 . . . 50
➥Was Total War
4-5 . . . 35
6-10 . . . 25

Marvel and DC Present MARVEL, 1982
1 . . . 12

Marvel Chillers MARVEL, 1975
1 . . . 12
2 . . . 7
3 . . . 10
4 . . . 7
4/30¢ . . . 20
5 . . . 7
5/30¢ . . . 20
6 . . . 5
6/30¢ . . . 20
7 . . . 5

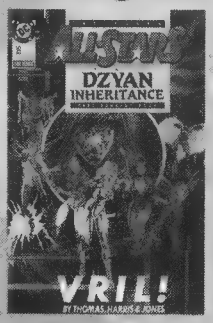
Marvel Collectors' Item Classics MARVEL, 1966
1 . . . 125
2 . . . 70
3-4 . . . 45
5-6 . . . 30
7-10 . . . 15
11-20 . . . 12
21 . . . 15
22 . . . 17
23 . . . 20

Marvel Family FAWCETT, 1945
1 . . . 1100
2 . . . 525
3 . . . 425
4-5 . . . 315
6-10 . . . 265
11-20 . . . 200
21-30 . . . 165
31-40 . . . 135
41-70 . . . 100
71-81 . . . 85
82-89 . . . 75

Marvel Feature MARVEL, 1971
1 . . . 125
2 . . . 60
3 . . . 30
4 . . . 25
5-10 . . . 10
11 . . . 55
➥Thing vs. Hulk
12 . . . 35

Marvel Mystery Comics MARVEL, 1939
2 . . . 30000
3 . . . 15000
4 . . . 12500
5 . . . 22500
6-7 . . . 7500
8 . . . 10000
9 . . . 25000
10 . . . 8000
11 . . . 3800
12 . . . 4000
13 . . . 5000
14-17 . . . 2500
18 . . . 2250
19-20 . . . 2500
21 . . . 2000
22-25 . . . 1700

Young All-Stars #19 ★★★



© DC

"The Dzyan Inheritance, Part 4: Vril!"

While Thule and the Dzyan he now controls attack an Arctic Army base, The Young All-Stars escape captivity and set out to stop him.

The appearance of Frankenstein's monster was more of a *deus ex machina* moment, designed to save the wounded Dzyan woman who would eventually save the day. Certainly, there were other methods available to accomplish this.

Another nod to other bits of pop culture comes at the issue's end, as a soldier makes reference to a trio of nephews who complete each other's sentences. More origins are coming up.

DC
Dec 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Malcolm Jones III
Cover: Michael Bair

No CGC Comics

Then $1.25 NOW $1

UNSLABBED Near Mint

26-30 1475
31-41 1325
42-48 1125
49 1450
50 1125
51-67 1000
68-78 860
79 810
80 1275
81 975
82 2250
83 810
84 1250
85 810
86 890
87 785
88-91 950
92 2500

Marvel Premiere
MARVEL, 1972

1 35
2 12
3 30
➥Dr. Strange
4 10
5-6 8
7 15
8 10
9 6
10 9
11-12 5
13 8
14 12
15 80
➥1st Iron Fist
16 20
17-18 12
19-24 10
25 15
26 4

Marvel Premiere
CONTINUED

27 10
28 13
29 3
29/30¢ 20
30 3
30/30¢ 20
31 3
31/30¢ 20
32-36 3
36/35¢ 15
37 3
37/35¢ 15
38 3
38/35¢ 15
39-49 3
50 13

UNSLABBED Near Mint

➥1st Alice Cooper
51-56 3
57 5
58-61 3

Marvel Presents
MARVEL, 1975

1 11
2 5
3 10
4 4
4/30¢ 20
5 4
5/30¢ 20
6 4
6/30¢ 20
7-12/35¢ 4

Marvel Preview
MARVEL, 1975

1 15
2 60
➥Punisher origin
3 10
➥Blade app.
4 7
5-24 5

Marvel's Greatest Comics
MARVEL, 1969

➥Was Marvel Collector's Item Classics
23-34 15
35-37 10
38-50 4
51-63 3

Marvel's Greatest Comics
CONTINUED

63/30¢ 20
64 3
64/30¢ 20
65-70 3
71 2
71/35¢ 15
72 2
72/35¢ 15
73 2
73/35¢ 15
74-96 2

Marvel Spotlight
MARVEL, 1971

1 25
2 130

UNSLABBED Near Mint

3-4 30
5 275
➥1st Ghost Rider
6 45
7 35
8 25
9 30
10 35
11-12 22
13 12
14-15 10
16-19 7
20-21 5
22 6
23-24 5
25-27 3
27/30¢ 20
28 10
28/30¢ 18
29 9
29/30¢ 15
30-31 3
32 50
➥1st Spider-Woman
33 3

Marvel Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1966

12 95
➥1st Captain Mar-vell; was Fant. M'pieces
13 50
14 75
➥Reprints 1st Kirby
15 42
16 25
17 30
18 40
➥1st Guardians
19 20
20 35
21-27 12
28-30 10
31 20
32 6
33-38 5
39-45 4
46-57 3
57/30¢ 20
58 3
58/30¢ 20
59-65 3
65/35¢ 15
66 3
66/35¢ 15
67-80 3
81-105 2
Special 1 40

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars
MARVEL, 1984

1 4
2 2
3 3
4 4
5 3
6 4
7 3
8 15
➥1st black costume
9-10 2
11 3
12 2

Marvel Super Special
MARVEL, 1977

1 85
➥Kiss
2-3 8
4 30
➥Beatles
5 55
➥Kiss
6-9 7
10 6
11-15 5
16 7
17-41 4

Marvel Tales
MARVEL, 1964

1 175
2 85
3 45
4-5 30
6-9 25
10 30
11-16 25
17-21 20
22-32 15
33-44 12
45-66 10
66/30¢ 20
67 10
67/30¢ 20
68 10
68/30¢ 20
69 10
69/30¢ 20
70 10
70/30¢ 20
71 10
72-80 7
80/35¢ 18
81 7
81/35¢ 15
82 7
82/35¢ 15
83 7

March Comics Birthdays

March 1
Chuck Rozanski (1955)
Tom Orzechoswki
William M. Gaines (1922)
Arnold Drake (1924)
Joyce Brabner (1952)
Ralph Ellis Miley (1956)
George Kochell (1957)

March 2
Theodor Seuss Geisel (1904)
Mark Evanier (1952)
Kevin Farrell (1956)

March 3
Max Allan Collins (1948)
Dan Mishkin (1953)

March 4
Randy Stradley (1956)
Bill Fitts (1963)
Glenn Hauman (1969)

March 5
Nathan Massengill

March 6
Allen Milgrom
Will Eisner (1917)
Carl Knappe (1954)
Kieron Dwyer (1967)
Robert Lewis (1971)

March 7
Alan Weiss
Gray Morrow (1934)
Peter Gross (1958)
Cully Hamner (19690

March 8
Joellyn Dorkin (1955)

March 9
Rick Burchett (1952)
Mike Kazaleh (1962)
Mike Wolfer (1963)
Richie Prosch (1966)

March 11
Steve Novak

March 12
Carol Jazwynski
Sy Barry (1928)
R.A. Jones (1953)
Graham Nolan (1962)

March 13
Al Jaffee (1921)

March 14
Helen Hamilton
Stephen R. Bissette
Hank Ketcham (1920)
Tom Batiuk (1947)
Brian Walker (1952)
Mike DeCarlo (1957)
Felipe Echevarria (1959)
Steve Brooks (1966)

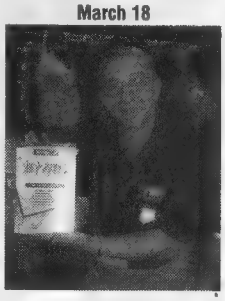
March 15
Bob Budiansky
Dave Marchman
Dan Adkins (1937)
John R. Cochran (1943)
Steve Kimball (1962)
Robert S. Elinskas (1972)

March 16
Steve Lafler (1957)
Kate Worley (1958)

Todd McFarlane (1961)

March 17
Flo Steinberg
Veronica Carlin
Rich Powers (1960)

March 18

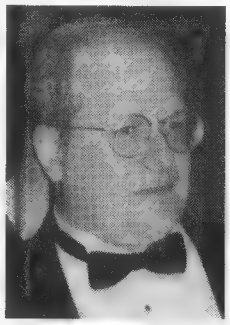


Bill Cole
Frank McLaughlin (1935)
Kent Marshall Burles (1955)
Bill Reinhold (1955)
Shea Anton Pensa (1968)

March 19
Michael Jantze
Laurie S. Sutton (1953)
Willie Schubert (1952)

March 20
Diana Albers
Steven Philip Jones (1960)
Vince Argondezzi (1960)
David Gross (1968)

March 21
Al Williamson (1931)
Don Markstein (1947)
Pasquale "Pat" Gabriele (1956)



Mark Waid (1962)

March 22
Diane Valentino
John Stanley (1914)
Bernard Krigstein (1919)
Lisa Moore (1967)

March 23
Jim Friel (1946)
Chuck Bordell (1968)

March 25
Neil Grahame
Angel Medina (1964)

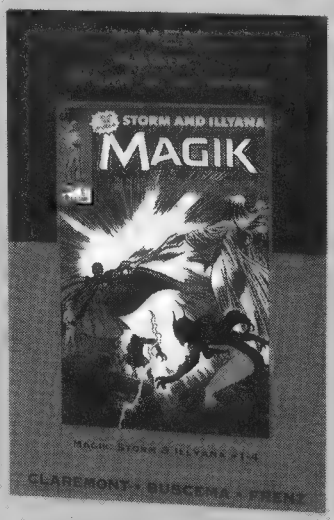
March 26
José Luis Garcia-Lopez (1948)
Brian Bolland (1951)
Mark Verheiden (1956)
Robert Kraus (1959)
Mitch O'Connell (1961)
Vinson Watson (1973)

March 27
Steve Calrow
Carl Barks (1901)
Hy Eisman (1927)
Mike Friedrich (1949)
Mike Chen (1955)
John Floyd (1962)

March 28
Wayne Truman (1936)
Adam Philips (1952)
Peter Hsu (1953)

March 29
Jack Elrod (1924)
Mort Drucker (1929)
Val Mayerik (1950)
Elizabeth Hand (1957)
Marc Silvestri (1959)
G. Raymond Eddy (1960)

March 31
Steven T. Seagle (1965)



Marvel Premiere Classic: Magik

Marvel

$19.99, color, 104 pgs.

Writer: Chris Claremont

Artists: John Buscema, Ron Frenz, Tom Palmer

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

This collects the 1984 mini-series and gives it the Marvel Premiere Classic hardcover treatment, to boot. It's a good series, but whether it deserves to be in hardback is open to debate.

This story reveals the seven years that Magik — Illyana Rasputin — spent in Limbo, although only a day had passed on the earthly plane. Teaming up with the Limbo doppelgänger of Storm, Illyana learns dark magic and battles Belasco and S'ym. Chris Claremont shows that he's as adept at doing sword-and-sorcery stories as he is with urban fantasy and space opera: other settings in which The X-Men have fought.

It's odd to see this series drawn by John Buscema (*Conan, Avengers, Silver Surfer*) and Ron Frenz (*Amazing Spider-Girl, Amazing Spider-Man, Thor*), who really aren't associated with X-titles. Nonetheless, the art looks great — Buscema is in his element — and it is a rare treat to see these artists collaborate with Claremont, the definitive X-Men writer.

Reprints *Magik: Storm and Illyana* #1-4

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-0785130932

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Marvel Tales
CONTINUED
83/35¢ 15
84 7
84/35¢ 15
85 7
86-122 5
123-136 4
137 7
138-144 5
145-183 4
184-191 2
192 3
193-286 2
286/CS 3
287-291 2

Marvel Team-Up
MARVEL, 1972
1 185
2 30
3 25
4 45
➥X-Men app.
5 18
6-10 16
11 13
12 18
➥Werewolf app.
13-20 13
21-31 8
32-44 5
44/30¢ 20
45 5
45/30¢ 20
46 5
46/30¢ 20
47 4
47/30¢ 20
48 4
48/30¢ 20
49-52 4
53 15
➥X-Men app.
54-58 4
58/35¢ 15
59 4
59/35¢ 15
60 4
60/35¢ 15
61 4
61/35¢ 15
62 4
62/35¢ 15
63-65 4
66 7
➥Captain Britain app.
67-94 4
95-99 3
100 6
101-136 3
137 4
138-143 3
144 4
145-150 3
Ann 1 30
Ann 2 6
Ann 3 4
Ann 4-6 3
Ann 7 2

Marvel Triple Action
MARVEL, 1972
1 20
2-5 12
6-29 8
29/30¢ 20
30 5
30/30¢ 20
31-36 5
36/35¢ 15
37 5
37/35¢ 15
38-47 5
GS 1-2 10

Marvel Two-In-One
MARVEL, 1974
1 55
2 15
3 10
4 7
5-6 8
7-10 5
11-15 3
15/30¢ 30
16 3
16/30¢ 30
17 3
17/30¢ 30
18 3
18/30¢ 30
19-25 3
26-28 2
28/35¢ 20
29 2
29/35¢ 20
30 2
30/35¢ 20
31 2
31/35¢ 20
32-50 2
51 3
52-53 2
54 4
55-99 2
100 3
Ann 1 4
Ann 2 15
➥Warlock dies
Ann 3-4 2
Ann 5 3
Ann 6-7 2

Marvel Zombies
MARVEL, 2006
1 55
1/2nd 35
1/3rd 12
2 16
3 6
3/2nd 4
4-5 3

Marvel Zombies vs. Army of Darkness
MARVEL, 2007
1 5
1/2nd-5 3

Master of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974
17 15
18 7
19-20 6
21-31 5
32-39 4
39/30¢ 20
40 3
40/30¢ 20
41 3
41/30¢ 20
42 3
42/30¢ 20
43 3
43/30¢ 20
44-99 3
53-57/35¢ 15
100 4
101-124 2
125 3
Ann 1 20

Men in Black
AIRCEL, 1990
1 15
2 10
3 8

Metal Men
DC, 1963
1 500
2 225
3-5 150
6-10 80
11-20 55
21-26 45
27 80
➥Metal Men
28-30 42
31-41 24
42-44 12
45-56 6

Mickey Mouse
DELL, 1963
28-30 40
31-35 30
36-40 25
41-50 20
51-60 16
61-70 15
71-80 14
81-100 12
101-120 11
121-140 10
141-160 8
161-180 7
181-200 6
201-203 5
204 8
205-206 5
207 20
208 50
209 20
210-214 7
215-218 10
219 12
220 4
221-240 3
241-256 2

Mickey Mouse and Friends
GEMSTONE, 2003
257-284 3

Micronauts
MARVEL, 1979
1 4
2-5 3
6-58 2
59 3
Ann 1 4
Ann 2 3
Special 1-5 2

Midnight Tales
CHARLTON, 1972
1 18
2 10
3-5 8
6-17 6
18 8

Mighty Comics
ARCHIE, 1966
40-50 15

Mighty Heroes
DELL, 1967
1 125
2-4 60

Mighty Samson
GOLD KEY, 1964
1 75
2-4 45
5-10 30
11-20 20
21-31 15
32 10

Military Comics
COMIC MAGAZINES, 1941
1 9000
2 2700
3 2150
4 1600
5 1375
6-7 1110
8-10 1000
11-12 875
13-15 760
16-20 650
21-22 560
23-43 465

Miracleman
ECLIPSE, 1985
1 10
2-4 8
4/Gold 15
5 8
5/Platinum 15
6-8 8
8/Gold 15
9-10 10
11-12 14
13 18
14 24
15 35
16 16
17 25
17/Gold 40
18 20
19-22 15
23 16
24 25
3D 1 10
3D 1/Gold 18

Mister Miracle
DC, 1971
1 50
2 25
3 20
4 25
5 30
6 22
7-8 20
9-14 15
15-16 12
17-18 10
19-25 7
Special 1 4

Moon Girl
E.C., 1947
1 765
2 400
3 325
4 300
5 665
6-8 325
9 450
10-11 365
12 460

More Fun Comics
DC, 1936
➥Was *New Fun*
7-8 5600
9 6500
10 3250
11 2850
12-13 2450
14 12500
➥1st Dr. Occult
15-16 5000
17 4500
18-20 2150
21-25 1950
26-29 1775
30-40 1625
41-45 1325
46-50 1200
51 5000
➥Spectre cameo
52 54000
➥1st Spectre story
53 35000
54 9700
55 12400
➥1st Dr. Fate
56 4400
57-59 3100
59/15¢ 4500
60 3100
61-64 2500
65-66 2660
67 6850
68-70 2100
71 5750
72 1725
73 12200
➥1st Aquaman, G.A.
74 2450
75-80 1725
81-88 1150
89 1325
90-99 940
100 1060
101 7850
➥1st Superboy
102 1375
103 1025
104-105 760
106-107 650
108-110 165
111-120 140
121-124 115
125 575
➥Superman cover
126 115
127 225

Mouse Guard
ARCHAIA STUDIOS PRESS, 2006
1 90
2 25
3-6 10

Ms. Marvel
MARVEL, 1977
1 8
2-6 3
6/35¢ 15
7 3
7/35¢ 15
8 3
8/35¢ 15
9 3
➥1st Mystique
9/35¢ 15
10 3
10/35¢ 15
11-15 2
16 15
➥Mystique cameo
17 8
18 40
➥1st Mystique
19 3
20-23 2

Munsters
GOLD KEY, 1965
1 120
2 75
3-5 48
6-10 34
11-16 30

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #20 ★★★½

"Secrets"

The origins of Fury and Flying Fox are told.

While Fury's origins were already told in an issue of *Secret Origins*, here Roy and Dann Thomas add to that story, revealing more of her connections to the Furies of Greek myth. A quick rundown of the ties between various Grecian stories is a bonus.

Flying Fox has been an enigmatic figure for the past 19 issues, so it's only right that his origins are finally revealed. However, did he *have* to be tied to that other Roy and Dann Thomas creation, Arak? Seems a bit of a stretch, even with that character's mystical leanings.

DC • Win 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils and Inks: Ron Harris, Michael Bair, Tom DeZuniga
Cover: Malcolm Jones III

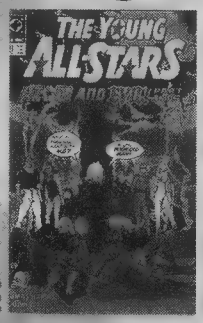
© DC

No CGC copies

Then $1.25 NOW $1

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #21 ★★★★



"Atom and Evil!, Part 1: The Americans"

A captured piece of Japanese information at Midway leads The Young All-Stars on a mission to save atomic scientists from the Nazis.

As Roy Thomas did back in *All-Star Squadron* #64, here he and Dann Thomas take on a post-*Crisis* adaptation of Gerry Conway and Jose Luis Garcia-Lopez' Superman vs. Wonder Woman story from *All-New Collector's Edition* #C-54 (Jan 78).

With the story set in World War II and featuring the Golden Age Man of Steel and Amazon Princess, it's fun to see characters that have taken their places in this post-*Crisis* universe play out the same story.

DC
Hol 1988 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Tom Grindberg
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Michael Bair

No CGC copies

Then $1.50 NOW $2

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
My Greatest Adventure DC, 1955	
1	1250
2	600
3-4	425
5-10	325
11-14	200
15-17	250
18	300
19	200
20-21	225
22-27	175
28	200
29-30	150
31-40	125
41-61	100
62-79	75
80	425
➥1st Doom Patrol	
81-85	150
Mystery in Space DC, 1951	
1	3000
2	1250
3	900
4-5	700
6-10	600
11-15	400
16-25	320
26-40	235
41-52	195
53	1500
➥Adam Strange starts	
54	425
55	250
56-60	175
61-71	125
72-74	100
75	225
76-80	100
81-86	75
87	175
➥Hawkman app.	
88-90	90
➥Hawkman app.	
91-93	50
94-103	40
104-110	30
111-117	5
Namora TIMELY, 1948	
1	2000
2-3	1200
Namor, the Sub-Mariner MARVEL, 1990	
1-5	2
6-36	1
37	2
38-49	1
50	2
50/Variant	3
51-62	2
Ann 1	3
Ann 2	2
Ann 3-4	3
New Adventure Comics DC, 1937	
12	3400
13	3200
14	2800
15-20	1975
21-22	1750
23-31	1475
New Avengers MARVEL, 2005	
0/Military	10
➥U.S. troops promo	
1	7
1/Retailer ed.	70
➥Spider-Man cover	
1/DirCut	5
1/Quesada	12
1/Finch	9
1/2nd	3
2	2
2/Hairsine	45
3	2
3/Wolverine	45
4	3
4/Cheung	15
4/DF	20
5	2
5/Granov	15
6	2
6/Hitch	15
7	8
7/Adams	25
8	3
8/Romita	20
9	3
9/Trimpe	15
10-33	3
34	5
35-37	6
38-44	4
Ann 1	4
New Book of Comics DC, 1937	
1	13000
2	6500
New Comics DC, 1935	
1	16000
2	10000
3-7	3000
8-11	2750
Not Brand Echh MARVEL, 1967	
1	45
2	18
3-5	15
6-8	10
➥Giant issues start	
9-13	25
Nova MARVEL, 1976	
1	8
2	4
3-25	3
10-14/35¢	15
Our Army at War DC, 1952	
1	1500
2	750
3-4	600
5-7	500
8-11	400
12	325
13	400
14	325
15-19	300
20	275
21-31	200
32-40	175
41-50	125
51-70	100
71-80	75
81	2500
➥1st Sgt. Rock	
82	650
83	1800
➥1st Kubert Rock	
84	300
85	350
86-87	300
88	325
89-90	300
91	700
➥1st all-Rock issue	
92-100	175
101-112	125
113-118	150
119	125
120-121	80
122-125	75
126	100
127	75
128	275
129-133	75
134-137	60
138-150	50
151	350
➥1st Enemy Ace	
152	50
153	140
➥2nd Enemy Ace	
154	40
155	75
➥3rd Enemy Ace	
156-157	40
158	60
159-163	40
164	80
➥Giant-sized	
165-167	40
168	90
➥1st Unknown Soldier	
169-176	30
177	50
178-181	30
182-183	40
184-185	30
186	40
187-189	30
190	40
191-198	25
199-202	20
203	35
➥Giant	
204-215	20
216	55
➥Giant-sized	
217-228	15
229	35
➥Giant-sized	
230-234	15
235-240	25
241	15
242	20
243-253	15
254	18
255	15
256	18
257	15
258-271	10
272	15
273-301	10
Planet Comics FICTION HOUSE, 1940	
1	12500
2	5000
3	3250
4-7	2500
8-12	2000
13-14	1500
15	2700
16-18	1350
19-24	1225
25-30	1000
31-40	850
41-50	600
51-60	500
61-70	400
71-73	300
Plop! DC, 1973	
1	18
2-3	8
4-5	7
6-23	5
24	8
Popeye DELL, 1948	
1	250
2	150
3-5	125
6-10	100
11-20	75
21-30	60
31-50	50
51-69	40
70-80	30
81-92	25
93-100	20
101-120	15
121-138	10
139-149	7
150-155	5
156-157	10
158	35
159	30
162-167	10
168-171	18
Special 1	2
Power Man & Iron Fist MARVEL, 1974	
17	8
18-20	5
21-30	4
30/30¢	20
31	4
31/30¢	20
32	3
32/30¢	20
33	3
33/30¢	20
34	3
34/30¢	20
35-44	3
44/35¢	15
45	3
45/35¢	15
46	3
Power Man & Iron Fist CONTINUED	
46/35¢	15
47	3
47/35¢	15
48	10
49-50	6
51-52	3
53-55	4
56	3
57	12
58-65	3
66	20
➥2nd Sabretooth	
67-77	2
78	5
79-83	2
84	6
85-125	2
Ann 1	4
Primer COMICO, 1982	
1	5
2	55
➥1st Grendel	
3-4	4
5	50
➥1st Sam Kieth art	
6	5
Rangers Comics FICTION HOUSE, 1941	
1	2750
2	850
3	650
4-5	500
6-12	425
13-19	350
20-24	300
25-29	250
30-39	175
40-59	120
60-69	90
Rawhide Kid MARVEL, 1955	
1	800
2	350
3-5	185
6-10	140
11-16	110
17	400
➥Origin, Kirby art	
18-21	95
22	90
23	200
➥Origin retold, Kirby	
24-30	90
31-44	75
45	90
46	60
47-60	35
61-70	25
71-86	18
87-92	15
93-99	12
100	18
101-113	12
114-120	10
121-133	7
133/30¢	20
134	7
134/30¢	20
135-140	7
140/35¢	15
141-151	6
Special 1	12
Richie Rich HARVEY, 1960	
1	3250
2	950
3	500
4-5	375
6-9	250
10	175
11-15	125
16-20	90
21-30	65
31-40	45
41-49	35
50-60	25
61-70	20
71-88	15
89-102	10

Flashbacks

Pre-Golden Age ...

115 yrs MAR 17 1894

Frank Beck is born in Tacoma, Wash. The cartoonist creates several features including ***All in a Lifetime***. His most popular strip is ***Bo***, based on his dog.

110 yrs MAR 24 1899

Allen Saunders is born in Lebanon, Ind. He goes on to write such comic strips as ***The Great Gusto***, ***Big Chief Wahoo***, ***Steve Roper***, ***Mary Worth***, and ***Kerry Drake***.

105 yrs MAR 2 1904

Theodor Seuss Geisel is born in Springfield, Mass. Adopting the pen name of "**Dr. Seuss**," he becomes known as a gag cartoonist, drawing for such publications as *Life*, *Vanity Fair*, *Liberty*, and *PM*. Known also as a children's book creator, he creates a line of "I can read" books, starting with *The Cat in the Hat*.

100 yrs MAR 13 1909

George Sixta is born in Chicago. He creates comic strips ***Dick Draper, Foreign Correspondent*** and ***Rivets***.

95 yrs MAR 22 1914

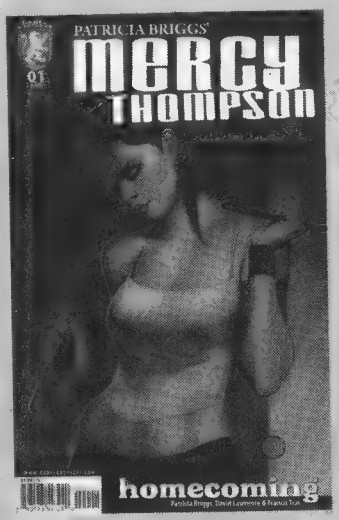
John Stanley is born. One of the greats of the Golden and Silver Ages, he works in anonymity for most of his career, providing scripts and roughs for countless stories, many of them focused on Marjorie Henderson Buell's **Little Lulu**, but his work includes a variety of other material, even including horror comics stories.

90 yrs MAR 6 1919

"Good Girl" artist **Bill Ward** is born. Though his most famous creation is the comic-book character **Torchy**, he also works on such comics characters as **Captain Marvel** and **Blackhawk** as well as on pin-up cartoons.

90 yrs MAR 22 1919

Bernie Krigstein is born in Brooklyn and works for a number of comic-book publishers. However, his greatest fame comes from the inventive art he provides to many stories published by **E.C.**



Patricia Briggs' Mercy Thompson: Homecoming #1

Dabel Bros.

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.

Writers: Patricia Briggs, David Lawrence; Artist: Francis Tsai

reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**

★★★

Tattooed Mercy Thompson is a coyote shape-changer who has long struggled to find her place — and, more important, employment — in the world of humans. (She's human on her mother's side.) After yet another disappointing interview, she both finds an unexpected career in automotive repair and experiences encounters with werewolves and vampires.

The paperback bookshelves have long overflowed with female vampire and/or demon hunters who have novel series of their own (Anita Blake, *etc.*), but author Patricia Brigg (with David Lawrence) does a solid job transferring her character Mercy Thompson to the comics format. And, while these sorts of supernatural characters and situations are even more common in comics these days, the author has managed to come up with a couple of unexpected twists.

The characters are strongly delineated, and the art is pretty — well, what can be seen of it, anyway. Unfortunately, the colors of the painted art, while attractive in and of itself, tend to overwhelm the drawn figures. But most of Mercy's many fans won't mind.

www.dabelbrothers.com

Richie Rich CONTINUED

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
103-126	7
127-159	5
160-200	3
201-254	2

Rip Hunter... Time Master DC, 1961

1	350
2	140
3	115
4-5	95
6-7	85
8-15	70
16-20	58
21-25	48
26-29	40

Rocky and His Fiendish Friends GOLD KEY, 1962

1	100
2-3	75
4-5	60

Ronin DC, 1983

1	4
2-5	3
6	5

Roy Rogers Comics DELL, 1948

1	600
2	275
3-5	200
6-10	140
11-20	105
21-30	90
31-40	75
41-50	55
51-60	45
61-80	35
81-100	30
101-145	25

Saga of the Swamp Thing DC, 1982

1	3
2-19	2
20	15
➥Alan Moore starts	
21	12
22-25	6
26-32	4
33	3
34	5
35-36	3
37	55
➥1st Hellblazer	
38	15
39-40	9
41-45	4
Ann 1-3	3

Sandman DC, 1989

1	25
2-3	12
4-7	4
8	15
➥1st Death	
8/Ltd.	35
9-14	4
15-21	3
22	4
23-49	3
50	5
50/Gold	20
51-74	3
75	4
Book 1/2nd	20
Special 1	5

Savage Tales MARVEL, 1971

1	150
2	32
3-4	20
5	12
6-11	10
12	8
Ann 1	25

Scooby Doo, Where Are You? GOLD KEY, 1970

1	100
2-8	50
9-19	25
20-30	15

Scooby Doo, Where Are You? CHARLTON, 1975

1	15
2	10
3-5	7
6-10	6
11	5

Scorpion ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975

1-2	16
3	10

Scream Comics HUMOR, 1944

1	100
2	55
3-10	45
11-18	42
19	52

Scribbly DC, 1948

1	900
2	550
3-5	430
6-10	325
11-15	265

Sea Devils DC, 1961

1	500
2	300
3	200
4-5	125
6-13	75
14-20	50
21-35	35

Secret Origins DC, 1961

Ann 1	400

Secret Origins DC, 1973

1	18
2	8
3-4	7
5-7	6

Secret Origins DC, 1986

1	5
2-50	2
Ann 1	3
Ann 2-3	2
GS 1	5
Special 1	2

Secret Six DC, 1968

1	45
2	15
3-5	12
6	15
7	20

Secret Society of Super-Villains DC, 1976

1	10
2-8	5
9-15	3

Sensation Comics DC, 1942

1	27500
2	5200
3	2750
4	1850
5	1550
6	1400
7-10	1140
11-20	1075
21-30	840
31-34	610
35-40	560
41-50	495
51-60	455
61-67	395
68	500
➥1st Huntress	
69-70	395
71-80	380
81	425
82-90	385
91-93	190
94	350
95-99	190
100-109	450

Sgt. Fury MARVEL, 1963

1	1500
2	400
3-5	225
6-10	150
11-12	100
13	500
➥Cap. America app.	
14-15	80
16-19	75
20-23	50
24	30
25-27	50
28-31	40
32-38	25
39-40	20
41-63	15
64-99	12
100	25
101	12
102	10
103-110	8
111-121	6
122-131	5
132-133	4
133/30¢	20
134	4
134/30¢	20
135-141	4
141-142/35¢	15
143-151	4
152-167	3
Ann 1	125
Ann 2	55
Ann 3	30
Ann 4	22
Ann 5	10
Ann 6-7	9

Sgt. Rock DC, 1977

302	25
➥Was *Our Army at War*	
303-307	15
308-312	10
313-320	8
321-330	6
331-341	5
342-350	4
351-390	3
391-422	2
Ann 1-2	4
Ann 3-4	3

Shadow DC, 1973

1	12
2-3	8
4	6
5	4
6	5
7-12	4

Shazam! DC, 1973

1	20
2-7	10
8	20
9-17	10
18-35	7

Showcase DC, 1956

1	3500
2-3	1000
4	27500
➥1st Silver Age Flash	
5	1000
6	4000
7	2000
8	11500
➥2nd SA Flash	
9	7500
10	3000
11-12	1750
13-14	4500
15	2000
16	1000
17	2750
➥1st Adam Strange	
18	1200
19	1500
20	1000
21	500
22	5600
➥1st SA Grn. Lantern	
23-24	1750
25-26	350
27	900
28-29	400
30	800
31-32	400
33	375
34	1250
35	700
36	525
37	700
38	400
39	350
40	300
41-42	150
43	450
44	100
45	325
46-47	100
48-52	80
53-54	100
55	275
➥Dr. Fate origin	
56	125
57	225
58	150
59	125
60	225
➥Spectre origin	
61	100
62	80
63	50
64	100
➥Spectre app	
65	50
66-72	30
73	85
➥1st Creeper	
74	45
➥1st Anthro	
75	75
➥1st Hawk & Dove	
76-77	50
78	35
79-81	45
82-84	40
85-87	20
88-93	15
94	20
➥New Doom Patrol	
95-96	8
97-103	6
104	5

Silly Symphonies DELL, 1952

1	200
2	175
3-4	125
5-9	110

Silver Streak Comics LEV GLEASON, 1939

1	11000
2	4000
3	3500
4	1750
5	2000
6	13500
7	8300
8	3200
9	1900
10	1500
11	1000
12-14	850
15-19	700
20-23	600

Silver Surfer MARVEL, 1968

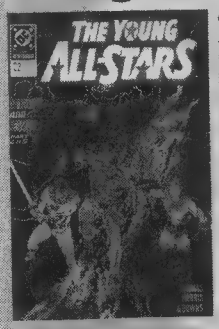
1	400
2	160
3	135
4	265
➥Surfer vs. Thor	
5-6	75
7	90
8	95
9-10	60
11	65
12	50
13	70
14	125
➥Spider-Man app.	
15-18	55

Solar, Man of the Atom VALIANT, 1991

1	7
2-7	5
8-9	6
10	16
➥1st Eternal Warrior	
11	5
12	4
13	2
14	4
15-16	2
17-32	1
33	2
34-41	1
42-50	2
51-56	3
57-58	4
59	5
60	10

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #22 ★★★



DC
Jan 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Michael Bair

No CGC copies

"Atom and Evil, Part 2: The Allies"

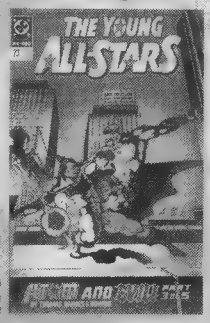
Four new heroes are introduced, representing England, France, China, and Russia. President Roosevelt tells The Young All-Stars that one of the four or Fury may be a spy.

Only one of the four new heroes, The Squire, has roots in the actual Golden Age. He later goes on to become The Knight. The others are all original, with Russian heroine Fireball indulging Roy Thomas' wish to use the Siberian disaster of 1907 as a catalyst for the creation of another character.

It's possible that Fury might be the spy, but unlikely, unless she's being coerced. This chapter deviates the furthest from its inspiration.

Then $1.50 NOW $2

Young All-Stars #23 ★★★



"Atom and Evil, Part 3: The Alchemists"

Kuei and The Squire join The Young All-Stars in attempting to protect the atomic scientists. Both missions fail, and an All-Star is slain.

It's a poignant issue with misunderstandings caused first by Kuei's monstrous appearance. (He's the Chinese hero who was transformed into a demonic-looking being after attempting to drown himself to escape the pain of wounds inflicted by a Japanese soldier.) Later, Tigress comes on strong to The Squire until she learns that he is married and has a son. (That boy later becomes the second Squire.) The end of the issue is shocking, to say the least.

DC
Mar 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Brian Murray

No CGC copies

Then $1.50 NOW $2

Spectre
DC, 1967

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	150
2	60
3-5	50
6-10	40

Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1990

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
-1	2
1-1/CS	5
1/Platinum	42
1/Silver	5
2-8	3
9	6
10	4
11-12	3
13	5
14	3
15-25	2
26	4
27-46	2
46/CS	3
47-49	2
50	3
50/Variant	4
51-51/Variant	3
52-56	2
57-57/Variant	3
58-74	2
75	4
76-98/B	2
Ann '97-'98	3
GS 1	4
Holiday 1995	3

Star Spangled Comics
DC, 1941

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	4500
2	1800
3	1000
4-5	875
6	800
7	8000
➥1st Newsboy Legion	
8-10	1600
11-16	1175
17	1500
18-19	1000
20-30	850
31-40	525
41-50	425
51-60	400
61-64	375
65	1050
➥Robin stories start	
66-68	690
69	800
➥1st Tomahawk	
70	690
71-80	575
81-83	450
84	625
85-86	450
87	625
88-94	500
95-99	265
100	300
101-110	225
111-112	200
113	375
114	325
115-131	200

Star Spangled War Stories
DC, 1952

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
132 (1)	750
133 (2)	550
3	475
4-6	285
7-10	220
11-20	185
21-30	130
31-40	90
41-50	70
51-70	60
71-83	55
84	125
➥1st Mlle. Marie	
85-87	80
88-89	65
90	325
➥1st Dinosaur Island	
91	45
92	110
93	45
94-99	110
100	145
➥1st Sgt. Gorilla	
101-133	60
134	65
135-138	60
139	50
140-143	24
144	27
145	35
146-150	20
151	125
➥1st Unknown Soldier	
152-153	20
154	55
➥Unk. Soldier origin	
155	16
156-161	14
162-180	6
181-204	5

Star Trek
GOLD KEY, 1967

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	350
2	125
3	100
4	90
5-6	75
7	60
8-9	50
10	40
11-19	30
20/Both	45
21-23	30
23/Whitman	45
24	25
24-25/Whitman	35
26	25
26/Whitman	35
27	20
27/Whitman	30
28	20
29/Both	30
30-31	20
31-36/Whitman	30
37-38	20
38-39/Whitman	30
40	20
40/Whitman	30
41/Both	25
42-43	15
44-45/Both	25
46	15
46-48/Whitman	25
49-51	15
51/Whitman	25
52	15
52-55/Whitman	25
56	15
56-59/Whitman	25
60	12
60/Whitman	20
61	12

Star Wars
MARVEL, 1977

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	20
1/35¢	800
1/2nd	4
2	10
2/35¢	150
3	8
3/35¢	150
4	7
4/35¢	150
5-19	7
20-21	6
22-23	5
24-48	4
49	5
50-106	4
107	25
➥Low distribution	
Ann 1	8
Ann 2-3	5

Strange Adventures
DC, 1950

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	2500
2	1150
3	850
4	800
5-6	650
7	625
8	550
9	1250
➥1st Captain Comet	
10	400
11	500
12	400
13	500
14	650
15	500
16	450
17	275
18-20	450
21-23	350
24	375
25	350
26-29	300
30	425
31-38	275
39	400
40-41	250
42	275
43	250
44	325
45-46	250
47	200
48	250
49	200
50	225
51	200
52-53	225
54	150
55	200
56-60	150
61-70	125
71-74	100
75	75
76-78	100
79	150
80-83	100
84	125
85-90	100
91	90
92-93	80
94	75
95	90
96	65
97	90
98	75
99	90
100	125
101	65
102-103	90
104-106	65
107	75
108-109	65
110	75
111	65
112	60
113	90
114	125
➥1st Star Hawkins	
115-116	60
117	550
➥1st Atomic Knights	
118	75
119	90
120	200
➥2nd Atomic Knights	
121-123	75
124	90
125-126	75
127	50
128	75
129	90
130-131	50
132	75
133-135	65
136-137	50
138	55
139-140	50
141	55
142-145	50
146	40
147-148	50
149	40
150-160	50
161-167	35
168	30
169	35
170	50
171-172	30
173	40
174	30
175	40
176-177	30
178	25
179	30
180	150
➥1st Animal Man	
181	25
182-183	30
184	60
185-186	25
187	20
188	25
189	30
190	100
191	20
192-193	25
194	20
195	35
196-197	25
198	20
199	30
200	25
201	40
202-204	20
205	125
➥Deadman begins	
206	60
➥Adams Deadman	
207	50
208-212	60
213	40
214	60
215	45
216	40
217-219	20
220	25
221-223	20
224-230	15
231-244	10

Strange Tales
MARVEL, 1951

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	2750
2	800
3-5	700
6-10	550
11-20	350
21-30	275
31-44	225
45-58	200
59	225
60	200
61	225
62-63	175
64	200
65-66	175
67-78	200
79	250
80	200
81-83	175
84	200
85-88	175
89	400
➥Kirby Fin Fang Foom	
90-92	175
93-96	150
97	350
➥Aunt May & Uncle Ben	
98-100	150
101	900
➥Human Torch starts	
102	425
➥Human Torch app.	
103-105	300
106	225
107	250
108-109	225
110	1250
➥1st Dr. Strange	
111	350
112-113	150
114	350
115	450
➥Dr. Strange origin	
116	125
117-118	100
119-123	125
124-125	75
126	90
127-129	75
130	90
131-134	75
135	125
➥1st S.H.I.E.L.D.	
136	75
137-147	50
148	75
➥Ancient One origin	
149-150	50
151	75
152-158	50
159	60
160-168	50
169	15
➥Series restarted	
170	10
171-177	7
178	15
➥Warlock origin	
179-181	10
182-185	3
185/30¢	20
186	3
186/30¢	20
187-188	3
Ann 1-2	350

Sub-Mariner
TIMELY, 1941

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	25000
2	7000
3	5000
4	4500
5	3500
6-11	2500
12-15	1500
16-20	1200
21-31	1000
32	1250
33-35	900
36-41	700
42	1000

Sub-Mariner
MARVEL, 1968

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	125
2	45
3-4	35
5	30
6-7	25
8	75
➥vs. The Thing	
9	30
10	25
11-13	20
14	50
➥Toro dies	
15-30	20
31-33	15
34	70
➥Hulk, Surfer app.	
35	35
➥Hulk, Surfer app.	
36-40	15
41-Special 1	10
Special 2	15

Sugar & Spike
DC, 1956

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	1700
2	700
3-5	500
6-10	350
11-20	250
21-30	150
31-40	125
41-50	75
51-60	55
61-80	50
81-98	35

Sun Girl
MARVEL, 1948

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	1000
2-3	675

Richie Rich-Sun $

Flashbacks

More Pre-Golden Age ...

85 yrs MAR 1 1924

Arnold Drake is born. He writes many comics and is best known for creating **Deadman** and **Doom Patrol** for DC and **Guardians of the Galaxy** for Marvel, though his work includes **Stanley and His Monster** and such other humor comics as those starring **Bob Hope**, **Jerry Lewis**, and **Little Lulu**. He is the first recipient of the **Bill Finger Award**.

85 yrs MAR 18 1924

Sam Grainger is born. He inks many Marvel comics during the 1960s and Marvel and DC during the 1970s and also draws for Charlton, fan publications, The Guild, First, and TSR.

80 yrs MAR 26 1929

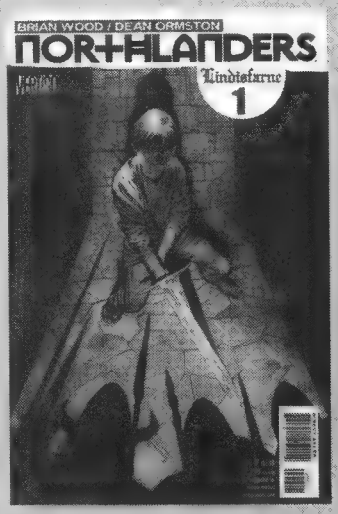
Cartoonist and designer **Edward Sorel** is born. He co-founds Push Pin Studios with **Milton Glaser** and **Seymour Chwast** and produces covers for such magazines as ***Harper's***, ***Esquire***, ***The New Yorker***, and ***Forbes***.

80 yrs MAR 29 1929

Mort Drucker is born in Brooklyn. He assists on the ***Debbie Dean*** strip but is best known for the distinctive caricature work he produces for *Mad* starting in the mid-1950s.

75 yrs MAR 7 1934

Gray Morrow is born in Fort Wayne, Ind., and works for Timely, ***Cracked***, and the ***Classics Illustrated*** line before becoming one of the recurring artists of the Warren magazine line. He then moves on to work at many other companies, specializing in realistic art, especially science fiction and fantasy.



Northlanders #9
DC/Vertigo

$2.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Brian Wood
Artist: Dean Ormston
reviewed by **Ray Sidman**

★★★

Brian Wood continues his superb *Northlanders* series with this, the first of a two-part story that examines the life of a young, motherless boy in a family of warriors (a commonplace thing back then). His youthful spirit fights to survive the rigors of life and ultimately is exercised through his hatred. And so the angry boy becomes an angry man.

It'd be nice to see this story as more than a two-parter in order to have more tales of the boy and the man he becomes, but, in its brevity, this is a more satisfying tale than the opening arc, which concluded in #8. It lacks the depth of that storyline, but obviously there's the crunching, immediate satisfaction of a short arc — and this one delivers.

Points to the constantly creative and intriguing writing of Brian Wood and the art of Dean Ormston. If you're not yet reading *Northlanders*, this is a great place to start; it'd be well worth the time and money.

www.dccomics.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Superboy
DC, 1949
1. 7000
2. 2000
3. 1500
4-5 1000
6-10 800
11-15 600
16-20 450
21-30 350
31-38 275
39-50 225
51-60 175
61-67 125
68. 500
➥1st Bizarro
69-77 100
78. 175
➥Mxyzptlk origin
79. 100
80. 150
➥Meets Supergirl
81-85 90
86. 200
➥Legion app.
87-88 90
89. 275
➥1st Mon-El
90-93 90
94-97 75
98. 100
99. 75
100. 175
➥Phtm. Zone villains
101-120 60
121-128 50
129. 75
130-137 40
138. 55
➥Giant-sized
139-140 40
141-146 35
147. 50
➥Saturn Girl origin
148-155 25
156. 65
➥Giant-size
157-164 25
165. 50
➥Giant-size
166-168 25
169-173 20
174. 30
175-178 20
➥Giant-sized
179-181 15
182. 20
183-196 12
197. 20
➥Legion stories start
198-199 12
200. 15
201. 12
202. 30
203-204 12
205. 40
206-207 12
208. 15
209. 10
210. 15
211-212 10
213-221 7
222-230 5
Ann 1 175
SP 1 4

Superboy
DC, 1990
1-18 2
Special 1 3

Superboy
DC, 1994
0. 2
1. 3
2-24 2
25. 3
26-99 2
100. 3
1000000. 4
Ann 1-2 4
Ann 3 3
Ann 4 4

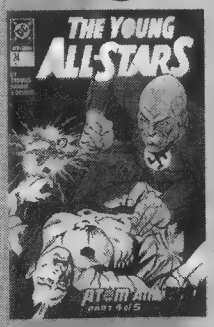
UNSLABBED Near Mint

Superboy and the Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1977
231-250 5
251-258 4

Super Goof
GOLD KEY, 1965
1. 24
2-3 12
4-10 10
11-20 7
21-30 5
31-57 3
58-59 4
60. 15
61. 70
62. 15
63. 3
64-66 5
67-69 8
70-74 15

Superman
DC, 1939
1. 160000
2. 16000
3. 9200
4. 6500
5. 6000
6-7 3500
8-10 2850
11-13 2200
14. 4500
➥U.S. flag cover
15. 2050
16-20 1650
21. 1500
22-23 1100
24. 1400
25. 1050
26. 1250
27-29 950
30. 1350
➥1st Mr. Mxyzptlk
31-40 825
41-50 650
51-52 525
53. 1800
➥Superman origin
54-60 500
61. 1000
➥1st Kryptonite
62-70 475
71-75 450
76. 1100
➥Batman team-up
77-80 400
81-90 375
91-95 360
96-99 325
100. 1500
101-110 280
111-120 240
121-130 195
131-139 155
140. 175
➥1st Bizarro Jr.
141-145 115
146. 160
➥Superman origin
147. 135
148. 115
149. 125
➥Legion app.
150-161 68
162-180 58
181-186 55
187. 60
188-192 55
193. 60
194-198 55
199. 180
➥1st race with Flash
200. 60
201. 24
202. 30
203-211 24
212. 50
➥Superbabies
213-216 24

RETROVIEW
Young All-Stars #24 ★★★



"Atom and Evil, Part 4: The Axis"

"Iron" Munro and Fireball try to keep scientists in New York safe, while Fury and Phantasmo shield uranium in St. Louis.

While the first part of this five-part story may have stayed close to its original version, the later chapters have veered further and further away. That's a *good* thing since it lets longtime readers enjoy a new story, as well.

If this story were being produced today, some would accuse Roy and Dann Thomas of decompressed storytelling, designed for a trade-paperback collection. As it is, the story only slightly drags in spots, and that's understandable.

DC • Apr 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Bob Downs, Mike Gustovich
Cover: Harris, Downs

No CGC copies

Then $1.75 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

217. 30
218-221 20
222. 30
223-226 20
227. 30
228-231 20
232. 30
233. 40
➥Kryptonite destroyed
234-238 18
239. 30
➥Giant-sized
240-244 18
245. 22
246-251 18
252. 60
➥100-page issue
253. 18
254. 22
255-264 9
265-271 8
272. 20
➥100-page issue
273-277 7
278. 17
➥100-page issue
279-283 5
284. 7
285-286 5
287-292 4
293-299 3
300. 11
301-350 3
351-399 2
400. 5
401-422 2
423. 5
Ann 1 600
Ann 2 325
Ann 3 210
Ann 4 180
Ann 5 105
Ann 6 90
Ann 7 62
Ann 8 46
Ann 9-10 5
Ann 11 4
Ann 12 3
Special 1-3 4

Superman
DC, 1987
0. 3
1-2 4
3-5 3
6-8 2
9. 4
10-49 2
50. 4
51-52 2
53. 3
54-72 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

73. 3
74. 4
75. 5
➥Death of Superman
75/CS 12
75/Platinum . . 40
76-77 3
78. 2
78/CS 3
79-82 2
82/Variant 4
83-99 2
100. 3
100/Variant . . . 4
101-122 2
123. 3
123/Variant . . . 5
124-150 2
150/Variant . . . 4
151-170 2
171. 4
172-174 2
175. 4
176-190 2
190/A 4
191. 2
192. 3
193-199 2
200. 4
201. 8
202. 2
203. 6
204. 4
204/Sketch. . 250
204/DF Lee. . . 30
204/DF Azzarell25
205/Lee 4
205/Variants. . . 3
205/DF Turner 25
206-207 3
208. 5
209. 4
210-215 3
216. 5
➥Inf. Crisis tie
217. 7
➥OMAC app.
218. 5
219. 6
➥Sacrifice Pt. 1
219/Variant-226 3
650. 8
651-675 3
1000000. 4
1000000/Ltd. . 15
Ann 1 4
Ann 2-6 3
Ann 7 4
Ann 8-11 3
Ann 12 4
GS 1-2 5
GS 3. 6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Special 1 4
3D 1. 5

Superman Adventures
DC, 1996
1-3 3
4-20 2
21. 4
22-66 2
Ann 1 4
Special 1 3

Superman Family
DC, 1974
164. 35
➥100-page issue
165-169 13
➥100-page issue
170-177 11
178-180 5
181-200 4
201-222 3

Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane
DC, 1958
1. 2600
2. 625
3. 415
4-5 300
6-10 220
11-18 125
19. 215
20. 125
21-29 86
30-50 48
51-67 34
68. 44
69. 34
70. 175
➥1st SA Catwoman
71. 105
➥Catwoman app.
72-73 15
74. 34
75-76 15
77. 24
78. 15
79-85 10
86. 16
87-94 10
95. 25
➥Giant-sized
96-103 8
104. 16
105-106 14
107-110 6
111. 10
112. 6
113. 14

UNSLABBED Near Mint

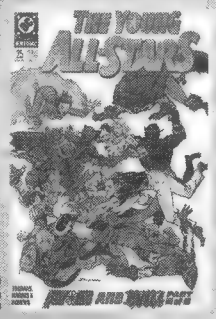
114-120 6
121. 5
122-123 8
124-137 5
Ann 1 75
Ann 2 50

Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen
DC, 1954
1. 4000
2. 1250
3. 675
4-5 475
6-10 335
11-20 235
21-30 150
31-40 100
41-50 75
51-56 50
57-70 30
71. 25
72-73 30
74-75 25
76. 30
77-88 25
89-90 20
91-94 16
95. 25
96-99 16
100. 25
101-103 12
104. 35
➥Weird Adventures
105-112 12
113. 25
➥Anti-Superman ish
114-119 12
120-126 10
127. 16
128-130 10
131-132 8
133. 10
134. 25
135-140 12
141-150 10
151. 8
152-163 7

Super-Team Family
DC, 1975
1. 12
2-4 6
5-10 4
11-15 3

Super-Villain Team-Up
MARVEL, 1975
1. 7

Young All-Stars #25 ★★★



"Atom and Evil, Part 5: Armageddon '42"

While The Atom and The Young All-Stars rescue the captured scientists and put an end to the Nazi plot, "Iron" Munro learns more of his connection to the Nazi Ubermensch and The Tigress is returned to life, but at a cost.

In the words of Marvin Martian, "Where's the Earth-shattering kaboom?" The denouement of this story is lacklustre, despite a fairly savage fight or two, and it certainly looks as though Axis Amerika and The Young All-Stars will clash again.

Ubermensch's ties to Munro have been intriguing since the early issues and it's past time they were fully revealed.

DC
May 1989 • 25 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Harris

In near copies **Then $1.25 NOW $2**

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
MIRAGE, 1984

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 300
1/Counterfeit ... 2
2 ... 28
2/Counterfeit ... 2
3-3/Misprint ... 15
4 ... 12
5 ... 4
6 ... 3
7 ... 5
8 ... 4
9-10 ... 3
11 ... 4
12-15 ... 3
16-62 ... 2

Teen Titans
DC, 1966

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 260
2 ... 100
3-5 ... 40
6-10 ... 32
11-17 ... 28
18-22 ... 33
23-25 ... 18
26-30 ... 12
31 ... 20
➥Giant-sized
32-38 ... 18
39-43 ... 12
44-47 ... 7
48 ... 12
49 ... 7
50 ... 20
51-53 ... 6

Teen Titans
DC, 1996

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 4
2-10 ... 3
11 ... 2
12 ... 3
13-24 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 4
Ann 1999 ... 5

Terry and the Pirates Comics
HARVEY, 1947

UNSLABBED Near Mint
3 ... 285
4 ... 160
5 ... 100
6-10 ... 65
11-20 ... 55
21-25 ... 45
26-28 ... 28

Thing
CHARLTON, 1952

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 735
2-4 ... 585
5-9 ... 540
10-14 ... 390
15-17 ... 295

Thing
MARVEL, 1983

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 6
2-10 ... 2
11-13 ... 1
14 ... 2
15-36 ... 1

30 Days of Night
IDEA & DESIGN WORKS, 2002

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 55
1/2nd ... 7
2 ... 25
3 ... 10
Ann 2004 ... 5

Thor
MARVEL, 1966

UNSLABBED Near Mint
126 ... 125
127-140 ... 45
141-160 ... 32
161-164 ... 25
165 ... 40
➥Warlock app.
166 ... 36
167 ... 24
➥Galactus origin
168-169 ... 36
➥Galactus origin
170-177 ... 20
178-179 ... 18
180 ... 24
➥Thor vs. Mephisto
181 ... 23
182-192 ... 12
193 ... 55
194-199 ... 12
200 ... 16
201-205 ... 9
206-224 ... 7
225 ... 14
➥1st Firelord
226 ... 7
227-260 ... 5
260/35¢ ... 15
261 ... 5
261/35¢ ... 15
262 ... 5
262/35¢ ... 15
263 ... 5
263/35¢ ... 15
264 ... 5
264/35¢ ... 15
265-299 ... 3
300 ... 8
301-336 ... 2
337 ... 7
➥1st Beta Ray Bill
338 ... 3
339 ... 5
340 ... 4
341 ... 3
342 ... 4
343-348 ... 2
349 ... 3
350-373 ... 2
374 ... 3
375-400 ... 2
401-410 ... 1
411 ... 3
412 ... 2
413-431 ... 1
432-433 ... 2
434-449 ... 1
450 ... 3
451-473 ... 1
474-475 ... 2
475/Variant ... 3
476-481 ... 2
482 ... 3
483-499 ... 2
500 ... 3
501-502 ... 2
Ann 2 ... 65

UNSLABBED Near Mint
2 ... 5
3-5 ... 4
5/30¢ ... 20
6 ... 3
6/30¢ ... 20
7 ... 3
7/30¢ ... 20
8-12 ... 3
12/35¢ ... 15
13 ... 5
13/35¢ ... 15
14 ... 3
14/35¢ ... 15
15-17 ... 3

Swamp Thing
DC, 1972

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 60
2 ... 30
3-4 ... 20
5-6 ... 15
7 ... 12
8-10 ... 10
11-24 ... 5

Swamp Thing
DC, 1986

UNSLABBED Near Mint
46 ... 4
47-49 ... 3
50 ... 4
51 ... 3
52 ... 4
53 ... 5
➥Batman app
54-81 ... 3
82-83 ... 2
84 ... 5
➥Sandman app
85-89 ... 2
90 ... 3
91-99 ... 2
100 ... 3
101-124 ... 2
125 ... 3
126-140 ... 2
140/Platinum ... 6
141-149 ... 2
150 ... 3
151-158 ... 2
159-171 ... 3
Ann 4-5 ... 4
Ann 6 ... 3
Ann 7 ... 4

Tales From the Crypt
E.C., 1950

UNSLABBED Near Mint
20 ... 775
21 ... 900
22 ... 700
23-25 ... 520
26-30 ... 400
31 ... 460
32 ... 300
33 ... 675
➥Crypt Keeper origin
34-46 ... 295

Tales of Asgard
MARVEL, 1968

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 30

Tales of Suspense
MARVEL, 1959

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 1400
2 ... 540
3 ... 475
4 ... 450
5-10 ... 325
11-20 ... 240
21-32 ... 150
33-38 ... 135
39 ... 3500
➥1st Iron Man
40 ... 1100
41 ... 650
42-45 ... 325
➥1st Crim Dynamo
46-47 ... 210
48 ... 265
➥1st red/gold armor
49 ... 210
50 ... 155
51 ... 105
52 ... 140
53 ... 120
54-56 ... 62
57 ... 170
58-59 ... 210
➥Cap stories start
60 ... 120
61-62 ... 82
63 ... 180
➥Bucky origin
64 ... 72
65-66 ... 125
➥Red Skull origin
67-70 ... 52
71-80 ... 42
81-99 ... 32

Tales of the Unexpected
DC, 1956

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 750
2 ... 385
3 ... 275
4-5 ... 225
6-10 ... 165
11-20 ... 125
21-30 ... 100
31-39 ... 85
40 ... 650
➥Space Ranger starts
41-42 ... 275
43 ... 450
➥Space Ranger cover
44-45 ... 200
46-50 ... 150
51-55 ... 125
56-60 ... 100
61-70 ... 85
71-74 ... 60
75-82 ... 50
83-90 ... 30
91-100 ... 22
101-104 ... 20
➥Becomes *Unexpected*

Tales to Astonish
MARVEL, 1959

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 2000
2 ... 635
3-5 ... 440
6-10 ... 355
11-20 ... 265
21-26 ... 200
27 ... 3600
➥1st Hank Pym
28-34 ... 175
35 ... 1900
➥1st Ant-Man
36 ... 625
37-40 ... 350
41-43 ... 230
44 ... 500
➥1st Wasp
45-48 ... 150
49 ... 250
➥1st Giant Man
50-56 ... 95
57 ... 125
➥Spider-Man app.
58 ... 95
59 ... 150
➥Giant-Man vs. Hulk
60 ... 175
➥Hulk stories start
61 ... 75
62 ... 90
➥1st Leader
63-65 ... 75
66-69 ... 70
70 ... 100
➥Namor stories start
71-81 ... 55
82 ... 78
➥Iron Man app.
83-90 ... 55
91 ... 52
➥Silver Surfer app.
92-93 ... 75
➥Silver Surfer app.
94-99 ... 50
100 ... 75
101 ... 85

Tarzan
DELL, 1948

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 900
2 ... 525
3-5 ... 385
6-9 ... 290
10 ... 260
11 ... 235
12-15 ... 220
16-20 ... 160
21-30 ... 135
31-54 ... 80
55-70 ... 50
71-79 ... 42
80-99 ... 30
100 ... 40
101-110 ... 28
111-120 ... 25
121-131 ... 20

Tarzan
GOLD KEY, 1962

UNSLABBED Near Mint
132-154 ... 14
155 ... 18
156-162 ... 10
163-164 ... 8
165 ... 10
166-167 ... 8
168 ... 10
169-170 ... 8
171 ... 10
172-200 ... 7
201-206 ... 6

Tarzan
DC, 1972

UNSLABBED Near Mint
207 ... 17
208 ... 10
209-210 ... 6
211-229 ... 4
230-235 ... 8
236-258 ... 3

Tarzan
MARVEL, 1977

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 ... 3
1/35¢ ... 15
2 ... 2
2/35¢ ... 15
3 ... 2
3/35¢ ... 15
4 ... 2
4/35¢ ... 15
5 ... 2
5/35¢ ... 15
6-29 ... 2
Ann 1 ... 3
Ann 2-3 ... 2

Flashbacks

The Golden Age ... and Later ...

70 yrs MAR 18 1939 **Bill Cole** is born. Specializing in security products, he develops a full line of storage bags and boxes to hold comic books — and later expands his stock to include artists' supplies.

70 yrs MARCH 1939 **Fred Harman**'s comic-strip character **Red Ryder** enters the world of comic books in the form of strip reprints in ***Crackajack Funnies*** #9.

65 yrs MARCH 1944 **Millie the Model** is introduced in ***Gay Comics*** #1. This must mean that she can now apply for Medicare, not to mention Social Security benefits for all those years posing professionally.

60 yrs MAR 27 1949 **Mike Friedrich** is born. His early days in the comics field include writing ***Justice League of America*** for DC and ***Iron Man*** for Marvel. He publishes the ***Star*Reach*** anthology series and becomes involved in the business-management aspects of comics.

55 yrs MARCH 1954 Rinehart & Co. publishes ***Seduction of the Innocent*** by **Fredric Wertham M.D.** For some reason, the publisher removes his bibliography after publication; volumes that still contain those pages are a rarity almost immediately. The book follows years of anti-comics campaigning by the psychologist.

50 yrs MAR 29 1959 **Marc Silvestri** is born in Palm Beach. He becomes known for his work on Marvel series. When **Image Comics** is formed in 1992, he is one of the founders and owners. His **Top Cow** studio produces such titles as ***Witchblade*** and ***Cyberforce***, and he occasionally provides work for Marvel projects.

50 yrs MARCH 1959 The Silver Age incarnation of DC's **The Flash** gets his own title. ***Flash*** #105 continues the numbering of the Golden Age's ***Flash Comics***, which ended a decade earlier, in Feb 1949, with #104. Stories are by **John Broome**, **Carmine Infantino**, and **Joe Giella**.

C.E. Murphy's Take a Chance #1
Dabel Bros.

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: C.E. Murphy
Artist: Ardian Syaf
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett**
★★

A portion of the world's population is given super-powers by a genetically engineered virus released by North Korea. Now, Frankie Kempt (without the benefit of those powers) takes up the mask to become the crime fighter newspapers have dubbed Take a Chance.

When it comes time to naming a new super-hero, you want something original, but you can overshoot and come up with something that's weird and awkward, instead. And, while Take a Chance isn't the *worst* super-hero name (it would be hard to beat Atom Bob, Bob Phantom, or Speed Centaur), it's the worst in a while. It doesn't help that readers have already seen this premise in the *Wild Cards* novel series.

On the plus side, it has a strong cover and OK art — but, in spite of the comic's having been created by a published fiction writer, *Take a Chance* is surprisingly lacking in literary quality. It reads like a Lifetime Movie Network version of a standard Marvel or DC female vigilante.

www.dabelbrothers.com

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #26 ★★★½

"Sick Leave"

Tigress' personality change and departure from the group, as well as "Iron" Munro's leaving, causes the rest of the team to call it quits.

It's a maudlin issue, to say the least. The groundwork has been laid to turn The Tigress into Golden Age villainess The Huntress, while "Iron" Munro goes in search of his father, whom he had thought long dead.

After a reasonable amount of appearance time, the four new heroes — Fireball, Phantasmo, Kuei, and The Squire — are on their way out of the series, as well. A more international feel to the team and an increase in its overall power wouldn't have been the worst thing.

DC
Jun 1989 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Ron Harris
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Harris, Downs

No CGC copies

Then $1.25 NOW $2

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Thor CONTINUED	
Ann 3	12
Ann 4	10
Ann 5-7	7
Ann 8	6
Ann 9-12	4
Ann 13-19	3
Thor MARVEL, 1998	
1	5
1/A	20
1/B	5
1/C	6
1/D	8
1/E	5
2-2/A	3
3-11	2
12	3
12/DF	15
13-25	2
25/Gold	5
26-31	2
32	4
33-34	2
35	3
36-61	2
62-79	3
80	28
➥Avngrs Dissmbled	
81	5
➥Avngrs Dissmbled	
82-84	4
➥Avngrs Dissmbled	
85	3
Ann '99-'01	4
Thor MARVEL, 2007	
1	3
1/Variants	7
2	3
2/Dell Otto	5
3-6	3
Three Stooges GOLD KEY, 1961	
7	48
8-10	40
11-20	28
21-30	22
31-40	18
41-55	15
Thrilling Comics BETTER, 1940	
1	2000
2	800
3	650
4-10	500
11-18	425
19	500
➥1st Amer. Crusader	
20	425
21-30	350
31-40	310
41	700
➥Hitler cover	
42-52	270
53-70	225
71-80	90
THUNDER Agents TOWER, 1965	
1	140
2	75
3-5	55
6-8	42
9-10	35
11-15	38
16-19	22
20	15
Thunderbolts MARVEL, 1997	
-1	2
0	1
1	4
2-5	3
6-11	2
12	6
13-24	2
25	3
26-49	2
50	3
51-76	2
77-78	3
79-81	2
100	4
101-102	3
103	8
104-109	3
110	5
Ann '97	3
Tick NEC, 1988	
1	15
2	8
2/Variant	15
3	6
4-5	8
6-7	5
8-8/Variant	8
9-12	3
12/Ltd.	20
13	4
Special 1	50
Special 2	25
Tiger Girl GOLD KEY, 1968	
1	35
Tigerman ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975	
1	9
2-3	8
Time Tunnel GOLD KEY, 1967	
1	40
2	35
Titans DC, 1999	
1	3
1/Autographed	16
2-24	3
25	4
26-50	3
Ann 1	4
Tomahawk DC, 1950	
1	850
2	400
3-5	290
6-10	195
11-20	125
21-27	100
28	110
29	130
➥Frazetta art	
30	90
31-40	70
41-50	56
51-56	45
57	85
➥Frazetta art	
58-60	40
61-80	32
81-90	25
91-100	15
101-110	10
111-120	8
121-132	6
133-140	5
Tom & Jerry Comics DELL, 1949	
60	50
61-65	40
66-70	36
71-80	28
81-90	24
91-100	18
101-110	14
111-120	12
121-130	9
131-150	7
151-170	6
171-190	5
191-200	4
201-230	3
231-300	2
301-327	1
328-329	5
330	20
331-341	7
342-344	15
Tomb of Darkness MARVEL, 1974	
9	20
➥Cont'd from Beware	
10-20	10
20/30¢	20
21	10
21/30¢	20
22-23	10
Tomb of Dracula MARVEL, 1972	
1	100
2-3	35
4	30
5-6	18
7	15
8-9	12
10	100
➥1st Blade	
11	10
12	12
13	35
➥Blade origin	
14	12
15-16	10
17	12
18	10
19	12
20-21	10
22-29	8
30	10
31-32	8
33-41	7
42-43	6
43/30¢	18
44	6
44/30¢	18
45	6
45/30¢	18
46	6
46/30¢	18
47	6
47/30¢	18
48-49	6
50	10
51-57	6
57/35¢	12
58	6
58/35¢	12
59	6
59/35¢	12
60	6
60/35¢	12
61-69	5
70	8
Tomb of Dracula MARVEL, 2004	
1-4	3
Tomb of Dracula MARVEL, 1979	
1	15
2-6	6
Tomb Raider: The Series IMAGE, 1999	
0	3
0/Dynamic	5
½-1/D	3
1/Holofoil	7
1/Another Unive	5
1/Tower Gold	6
1/Tower	5
2	3
2/Tower	5
2/Tower foil	7
3	3
3/Monster Mart	7
3/Gold Mart	125
4	3
4/Dynamic	4
4/Dynamic with	8
5	3
5/Dynamic	6
6-7	3
7/Museum	125
8-9	3
9/White	4
9/Dynamic	6
9/Dynamic blue	7
9/Sketch	10
10	3
10/Gold foil	12
10/Red foil	10
11	3
11/Graham	7
12	3
12/Graham	8
13-15	3
15/Dynamic	10
16-46	3
47	4
47/Variant	3
48	4
48/Variant-50	3
Ashcan 1	5
Top 10 DC, 1999	
1	5
1/Variant	6
2-12	3
Top-Notch Comics M.L.J., 1939	
1	3500
2	1500
3	1000
4	825
5	900
6-8	650
9	3000
➥1st Black Hood	
10	1000
➥2nd Black Hood	
11-15	625
16-20	550
21-30	425
31-45	250
Tower of Shadows MARVEL, 1969	
1	55
2-5	25
6-8	15
9	8
Special 1	22
Transformers MARVEL, 1984	
1	10
2-3	5
4-69	3
70-76	5
77-79	10
80	18
Trigger Twins DC, 1973	
1	18
Trouble MARVEL, 2003	
1-5	3
True 3-D HARVEY, 1953	
1-2	30
Truth: Red, White & Black MARVEL, 2003	
1	5
2-7	4
Turok, Son of Stone DELL, 1956	
3	155
4-5	125
6-7	110
7/15¢	135
8-10	110
11-20	75
21-30	48
31-40	38
41-50	28
51-60	22
61-70	15
71-90	10
91-110	8
111-130	6
GS 1	100
TV Stars MARVEL, 1978	
1	15
2-4	7
Twilight Experiment DC, 2005	
1-6	3
Twilight Zone GOLD KEY, 1962	
1	90
2	55
3	42

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #27 ★★★★

"Meanwhile ..."

Fury recounts the exploits of the various members of The All-Star Squadron and The Young All-Stars in the early summer of 1942.

Giving in to reader requests, Roy and Dann Thomas take on the formidable task of making a diverse group of adventures from mid-1942 all fit into one story. While some of the tales, especially The Seven Soldiers of Victory's dust-up with The Skull and Johnny Quick's Hollywood adventure, receive a deluxe treatment, other tales are relegated to a single panel or two. Of course, that's one of the limitations of only having two dozen pages in which to summarize nearly that many separate stories.

DC
Jul 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: David Simon
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Simons

Then $1.75 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

4-10 35
11-20 30
21-27 16
28-30 10
31-40 8
41-51 6
52-70 5
71-92 4

Two-Fisted Tales
E.C., 1950
18. 700
19. 500
20. 325
21-22 260
23-25 210
26-30 160
31-35 130
36-41 115
Ann 1 550
Ann 2 400

Two-Gun Kid
MARVEL, 1948
1. 660
2. 300
3-4 220
5. 200
6-10 165
11-12 125
13-20 90
21-30 80
31-44 60
45-46 55
47. 45
48. 50
49-50 40
51. 50
52. 40
53-54 20
55. 40
56. 20
57. 40
58-59 20
60. 30
➥Two-Gun Kid origin
61-80 12
81-92 8
93-129 4
129/30¢ 20
130. 4
130/30¢ 20
131. 4
131/30¢ 20
132-136 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2001, A Space Odyssey
MARVEL, 1976
1-7 5
7/35¢ 20
8. 12
8/35¢-10/35¢ . . 5
GS 1 12

Ultimate Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 2004
1. 5
2. 4
3. 3
4. 2
5. 3
6. 2
7. 3
8. 4
9-13 2
13/Sketch. 6
14-18 2
19. 5
20. 4
21. 6
21/Variant 8
22. 16
23. 7
24-37 3
Ann 1-Ann 2. . . 4
Book 1 13

Ultimate Iron Man
MARVEL, 2005
1/Kubert 5
1/Hitch 4
1/Sketch. 6
2-5 3

Ultimate Nightmare
MARVEL, 2004
1. 3
2-5 2

Ultimates
MARVEL, 2002
1. 7
1/DF Millar . . . 20
1/DF Quesada. 25
2. 9
3. 6
4. 10
5. 8
6. 7
7. 6
8. 5
9. 6
10. 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

11. 3
12. 2
13. 4
13/DF Millar . . 20

Ultimate Secret
MARVEL, 2005
1-4 3

Ultimate Spider-Man
MARVEL, 2000
½ 8
½/A 18
1. 65
1/White 375
1/Dynamic . . 175
1/Kay-Bee. 4
1/FCBD. 3
1/Checkers. . . . 7
1/Payless 6
1/Target 175
3. 16
4. 8
5. 55
6. 9
6/Niagara 35
7. 9
8. 8
8/Payless-10 . . 6
11. 5
12. 4
13. 5
14. 4
15. 5
16-21 3
22. 4
23-26 3
27. 4
28. 3
29. 4
30. 3
31. 4
32. 3
33. 4
34-46 3
47. 4
48-49 3
50. 4
53. 3
60. 8
61. 5
62. 8
63. 5
➥Gwen Stacy returns
64. 4
65. 5
66. 2
67. 3
68-71 2
72. 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

73-77 2
78-99 3
100. 4
101-125 3
Ann 1. 4
Ann 2 3
SP 1. 4

Ultimate X-Men
MARVEL, 2000
½ 5
1. 14
1/Sketch. 20
1/Dynamic . . . 40
1/Checkers. . . 30
1/NYPost 8
1/Universal. . . 60
2. 7
3. 6
4-5 5
6-10 4
11-12 3
13. 4
14. 3
15. 4
16-17 3
18. 5
19. 4
20-26 3
27-32 2
33. 5
34. 4
40. 2
41. 5
42. 4
43-49 2
50. 5
50/Conv 15
51-59 2
60-61 3
61/Coipel 5
62-74 3
75. 4
76-88 3
Ann 1-Ann 2. . . 4

Umbrella Academy: Apocalypse Suite
DARK HORSE, 2007
1. 8
2-6 3

Uncanny X-Men
MARVEL, 1970
-1 2
142. 25
➥Future Past
143. 8

UNSLABBED Near Mint

144. 6
145. 7
146-148 6
149-157 5
158. 6
➥Rogue app.
159-161 5
162. 6
163-166 5
167. 4
➥Rogue joins team
168-175 5
176-177 4
178. 5
179. 4
180. 3
181. 4
182-183 5
184-186 4
187-188 3
189-190 4
191. 5
192. 4
193. 5
194-199 3
200. 6
201. 5
➥Portacio art
202-209 4
210-211 5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
212-213 8
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
214-215 3
216. 4
217-218 3
219-220 4
221. 7
➥1st Mr. Sinister
222. 5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth
223. 4
224-231 3
232. 4
233-243 3
244. 5
➥1st Jubilee
245-247 3
248. 5
➥1st Jim Lee X-Men
249-258 3
259. 4
260-265 3
266. 14
➥1st Gambit
267-268 6
269. 3
270. 4
271-280 3
281. 2
282. 3
283. 5
284. 4
285. 3
286. 2
287. 3
288-291 2
292. 3
293. 2
294/CS 3
295/CS 2
296/CS 3
297-299 2
300. 3
301-302 2
303. 3
304-306 2
307. 5
308-328 2
329. 4
330-352 2
353. 3
354-362 2
363. 4
364. 3
365-374 2
375. 3
376-378 2
379. 3
380-381 2
381/Dynamic . . 7
382. 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

383. 3
384-386 2
387. 3
388-399 2
400. 4
401-403 2
404. 4
405-415 2
416. 3
417-421 2
422. 4
423-429 2
430-438 3
439. 2
440-441 3
442. 2
443. 3
444. 4
445-449 2
450. 7
➥1st X-23
451. 6
➥X-23 app.
452. 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

453-454 2
455. 4
456-459 2
460-461 3
461/Kubert. . . 15
462-491 3
492. 6
493-499 3
500. 5
501-503 3
Ann 1 50
Ann 2 45
Ann 3 14
Ann 4 6
Ann 5 5
Ann 6 7
Ann 7 5
Ann 8 4
Ann 9 10
Ann 10 8
Ann 11-12 4
Ann 13 3
Ann 14 6
Ann 15 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 16 2
Ann 17-18 3
Ann 1995 4
Ann '96-'98 . . . 3
Ann '00-'01 . . . 4

Uncle Scrooge
DELL, 1953
4. 310
5. 220
6-7 185
8. 140
9-10 125
11-15 100
16-20 80
21-30 65
31-40 55
41-50 45
51-70 40
71. 38
72-100 32
101-120 20
121-140 18

UNSLABBED Near Mint

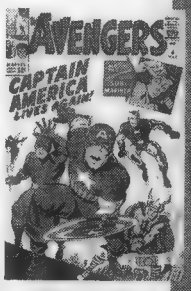
141-160 12
161-171 10
172-176 15
177-178 25
179. 225
180. 35
181-185 15
186-197 10
198. 15
199-200 10
201-219 6
220-240 5
241-260 4
261-299 3
300-308 2
309-318 7

Uncle Scrooge
GEMSTONE, 2003
319-349 7

Flashbacks

The Silver Age ...

45 yrs MARCH 1964



In Marvel's ***Avengers*** #4, two Golden Age characters make their first appearances in the Silver Age. **Captain America** and **Bucky** are featured in "Captain America Lives Again!" by **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby**, returning Cap to the Marvel universe.

45 yrs MARCH 1964

The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants are introduced in ***X-Men*** #4 by **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby**. It's the first appearance of Scarlet Witch, Quicksilver, Toad, and Mastermind.

45 yrs MARCH 1964

DC's ***Doom Patrol*** introduces **The Brotherhood of Evil** (not to be confused with The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants) in #86 in a story by **Arnold Drake** and **Bruno Premiani**.

40 yrs MARCH 1969

Has Marvel's **Franklin Richards** actually been *given* that name yet? Of *course* not! It's only four months and counting since he was born, and Pop Fantastic and Mom Invisible wouldn't want to rush into anything. Besides, what's the matter with "Baby Richards" as a name? Maybe he'll get major super-powers that'll let him take vengeance on any kids who might torment him.

35 yrs MARCH 1974

Oh, no! ***Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen*** comes to an end with #163 and two stories by **Leo Dorfman** and **Kurt Schaffenberger**! *Zee zee zee!* Just a minute, though. Jimmy's still around, OK? And the numbering continues as ***The Superman Family***. Whew.

35 yrs MARCH 1974

Writer-editor **Archie Goodwin** announces his resignation from DC's editorial department to return to Warren, where he edits (and writes) ***Creepy*** and ***Vampirella***.

Thor Vol. 1

Marvel

$19.99, color, 160 pgs.

Writer: J. Michael Straczynski

Artist: Olivier Coipel

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★

Thor officially returns to the Marvel universe after dying at the end of his prior series, missing "Civil War" and "World War Hulk." It's hard to understand where Thor *was* exactly, but he's reunited/merged with his one-time mortal identity of Dr. Don Blake.

His first order of business is to restore his fellow Asgardians, now reincarnated as mortals (something that's been done a few times too many). Thor is the strong, silent type, reminiscent of Arnold Schwarzenegger as Conan in *Conan the Barbarian*. The only high points are that Loki is now female and Thor beats the snot out of Iron Man over what happened during "Civil War."

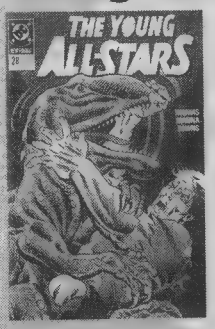
J. Michael Straczynski seems to be taking his sweet time reintroducing Thor to the Marvel universe. It's very slow-moving and has a "ho-hum, been there/done that" feel to it. It doesn't have the epic, kinetic feel of some of the most notable *Thor* runs — including those of Warren Ellis, Mike Deodato Jr., and William Messner-Loebs; Dan Jurgens, John Romita Jr., and Andy Kubert; Michael Avon Oeming and Andrea Devito; Stan Lee and Jack Kirby; or Walter Simonson.

Reprints *Thor* (Vol. 3) #1-4.

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 978-0785130116

RETROVIEW

Young All-Stars #28 ★★★



"Sons of Dawn, Part 1: Worlds Lost and Found"

"Iron" Munro's search for his long-lost father puts him in contact with Professor Challenger's granddaughter and takes the pair on a trip to a South American plateau populated by dinosaurs.

As the series heads into its final arc, Roy and Dann Thomas bring in one more literary reference, in this case Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*.

At this point, the book wasn't as well-known since an adaptation hadn't been seen in years and the concept seemed somewhat fresh.

Munro's quest is a good one to conclude the series.

DC
Aug 1989 • 23 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Lori Manna
Inks: Bob Downe
Cover: Manna, Downe

No CGC copies

Then $1.75 NOW $2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Unexpected
DC, 1968
105. 50
➥Was Tales of ...
106-113 35
114-116 30
117-127 25
128. 45
➥Wrightson art
129-139 20
140-156 15
157-162 30
➥100 pages
163-188 10
189-190 7
191. 10
192-206 7
207-222 5

Unknown Soldier
DC, 1977
205-210 5
211-229 4
230-247 3
248-249 5
250-267 3
268. 5

Unknown Worlds
ACG, 1960
1. 90
2. 60
3. 45
4-5 40
6-8 35
9. 50
10. 35
11-20 28
21-30 20
31-40 16
41-57 12

Unusual Tales
CHARLTON, 1955
1. 125
2. 75
3-5 45
6-11 80
12. 56
13. 30
14-15 56
16. 30
17-21 22
22. 35
23. 14
24-27 30
28-29 14
30-40 10
41-49 6

USA Comics
TIMELY, 1941
1. 12000
2. 4400
3. 3100
4-5 2500
6. 3550
7. 3400
8-10 2250
11-12 1500
13-17 1250

Usagi Yojimbo
FANTAGRAPHICS, 1986
1. 8
2-3 5
4-5 4
6-38 3
Special 1-3 4
Summer 1 5

Usagi Yojimbo
MIRAGE, 1993
1. 5
2-5 4
6-16 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

V
DC, 1985
1. 2
2-18 1

Valor
E.C., 1955
1. 190
2. 140
3-4 115
5. 105

Vampire Lestat
INNOVATION, 1990
1. 5
2-12 3

Vampirella
WARREN, 1969
1. 325
2. 125
3. 200
4-5 75
6-9 70
10. 30
11-15 43
16-25 30
26. 20
27. 30
28-36 25
37-45 20
46. 25
47-50 20
51-70 17
71-99 16
100. 30
101-111 16
112. 45
113. 195
Ann 1 175
Special 1 30

Vampire Tales
MARVEL, 1973
1. 35
2-7 18
8-10 20
11. 25
Ann 1 30
➥Scarce

Vault of Evil
MARVEL, 1973
1. 60
2-4 25
5-10 15
11-23 12

Vault of Horror
E.C., 1950
12. 4000
13. 800
14. 725
15. 600
16. 500
17-19 360
20-25 275
26-30 225
31-40 185

Vengeance Squad
CHARLTON, 1975
1. 9
2-6 5

Venom
MARVEL, 2003
1. 10
2. 3
3-7 2
8. 3
9. 4
10-18 3

Veronica
ARCHIE, 1989
1-20 2
21-35 1
36-177 2

UNSLABBED Near Mint

V for Vendetta
DC, 1988
➥Alan Moore series
1-10 3

Vicki
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975
1. 28
2. 18
3-4 12

Villains United
DC, 2005
1. 12
1/2nd 8
1/3rd 3
2. 5
3-5 3
6. 4

Vision & Scarlet Witch
MARVEL, 1982
1-4 2

Vision & Scarlet Witch
MARVEL, 1985
1. 2
2-12 1

Wacky Races
GOLD KEY, 1969
1. 40
2. 26
3-7 20

Walking Dead
IMAGE, 2003
1. 45
2. 32
3. 15
4. 12
4/A 6
5. 4
6-49 3

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories
DELL, 1940
1. 20000
2. 7500
3. 3400
4. 2050
5. 1250
6-7 1100
8-9 900
10. 850
11-15 750
16-17 650
18. 625
19-30 580
31. 3700
➥Barks Donald starts
32. 2000
33. 1200
34. 950
35-36 840
37. 435
38. 650
39-40 580
41-46 500
47-50 475
51-60 375
61-70 305
71-80 240
81-87 215
88. 270
89-90 210
91-97 190
98. 365
➥Unc. Scrooge starts
99. 190
100. 200
101-112 155
113-116 90
117. 130
118-123 85
124. 130
125. 190
126-129 130
130-133 125
134. 200
135-139 105
140. 225
➥1st Barks Gyro
141-150 94
151-170 88
171-200 80
201-240 75
241-260 60
261-283 50
284-285 25
286. 28
287. 25
288-289 28
290. 25
291-293 28
294-296 25
297-308 28
309-311 25
312. 28
313-334 14
335. 25
336-341 14
342-351 25
351-60/Poster 30
351-60/No poster 20
361-400 25
401-429 14
430. 10
431-432 12
433. 10
434-436 12
437-438 10
439-440 12
441-443 10
444-445 6
446-465 10
466. 6
467-478 10
479. 30
480. 125
481-484 30
485-510 10
511. 15
512-513 12
514-516 8
517-518 5
519. 14
520-549 10
550. 6
551-554 4
555-556 3
557-573 4
574-577 5
578-579 3
580. 5
581-584 3
585. 5
586-597 3
598-599 4
600-611 6
612-648 7

Walt Disney's Comics & Stories
GEMSTONE, 2003
634-661 7

Wanted
IMAGE, 2003
1. 12
1/A 9
1/B 8
1/C 3
1/D 6
1/E 5
2. 3
2/B 4
2/C 5
3. 3
3/A 4
4-6 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Wanted World's Most Dangerous Villains
DC, 1972
1. 10
2-3 8
4-9 6

War
CHARLTON, 1975
1. 8
2-10 5
11-22 3
23-49 2

War Is Hell
MARVEL, 1973
1. 25
2. 18
3-5 14
6-8 10
9-15 8

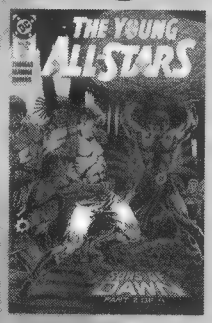
Warlock
MARVEL, 1972
1. 32
2-3 15
4-5 8
6-8 7
9-11 10
12. 8
12/30¢ 15
13. 8
13/30¢ 15
14. 8
14/30¢ 15
15. 8

Warlord
DC, 1976
1. 10
2. 4
3-6 3
7-29 2
30-47 1
48. 2
49-130 1
131. 2
132. 1
133. 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-6 1

Warlord
DC, 1992
1-6 2

Warlord
DC, 2006
1-10 3

Young All-Stars #29 ★★★½



"The Sons of Dawn, Part 2: Gladiator and Sons"

"Iron" Munro is reunited with his father, Hugo Danner, only to have Danner's other super-powered creations capture both men before setting out on their own plans of world conquest.

Danner's fears of an unstoppable race of beings like himself appear to be realized by the end of this issue, but it seems strange that they haven't fomented rebellion against Danner prior to this point.

The only thing missing from the story so far is exactly how Ubermensch obtained Danner's super-power formula. To this point, it had to be applied to fetuses still in the womb.

DC
Sep 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Don Marino
Inks: Bob Downs
Cover: Manna, Downs

No CGC copies

Then $1.75 NOW $2

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Watchmen DC, 1986	
1	20
➥Moore, Gibbons series	
2-3	10
4-12	8
Way of the Rat CROSSGEN, 2002	
1-24	3
Weapon X MARVEL, 1995	
1-4	2
Weapon X MARVEL, 2002	
1-8	2
9-28	3
Web of Horror MAJOR MAGAZINES, 1969	
1-3	30
➥1st Wrightson cvr	
Web of Spider-Man MARVEL, 1985	
1	8
2	6
3	5
4-10	4
11-28	3
29	5
30	4
31-32	5
33-35	3
36	4
37	3
38	5
39-47	3
48	8
➥1st Demogoblin	
49	2
50	3
51-57	2
58	3
59	8
60-61	3
62-89	2
90	5
91-99	2
100	4
101-105	2
106/CS	5
106	1
107-113	2
113/CS	4
114-116	2
117	3
117/Variant	5
118	3
119	2
119/CS	6
120	4
121-124	2
125	3
125/Variant	4
126-129	2
129/CS	5
Ann 1	7
Ann 2	6
Ann 3-10	3
SS 1	4
Weird Fantasy E.C., 1950	
1	1150
2	500
3-4	425
5	335
6-10	240
11-13	180
14	300
15	200
16-19	170
20	200
21	285
22	140
Weird Mystery Tales DC, 1972	
1	30
2	20
3	15
4-10	12
11-20	10
21	15
22-24	10
Weird Science E.C., 1950	
1	1450
2	625
3-4	575
5-10	360
11-14	230
15-18	260
19-22	335
Weird Science-Fantasy E.C., 1954	
23-24	235
25	270
26	220
27	235
28	260
29	450
Weird Science-Fantasy Annual E.C., 1952	
1	2000
2	1200
Weird Suspense ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975	
1	12
2	8
3	7
Weird Terror COMIC MEDIA, 1952	
1	500
2-4	300
5	230
6	260
7	230
8	260
9-10	200
11	260
12	190
13	200
Weird War Tales DC, 1971	
1	125
2	75
3	45
4-5	30
6-10	20
11-20	12
21-31	8
32-50	6
51-92	5
93	6
94-101	5
102-124	4
Weird Western Tales DC, 1972	
12	45
13	30
14-15	20
16-28	12
29	16
30-42	8
43-50	6
51-70	5
Weird Wonder Tales MARVEL, 1973	
1	14
2-3	7
4-7	5
8-15	4
15/30¢	20
16	4
16/30¢	20
17	4
17/30¢	20
18-22	4
Weird Worlds DC, 1972	
1	12
2-5	7
6	8
7	6
8-10	5
Wendy, the Good Little Witch HARVEY, 1960	
1	60
2	40
3-5	28
6-10	22
11-15	14
16-20	12
21-25	8
26-30	6
31-40	5
41-50	4
51-60	3
61-93	2
94-97	1
Werewolf By Night MARVEL, 1972	
1	80
2	30
3	15
4	18
5-10	15
11-14	12
15	15
16-17	12
18-20	10
21-31	8
32	60
➥1st Moon Knight	
33	30
34	8
35-36	5
37	10
38	5
38/30¢	15
39	5
39/30¢	15
40-41	5
42	12
43	18
West Coast Avengers MARVEL, 1984	
1	3
2-4	2
West Coast Avengers MARVEL, 1985	
1-3	2
4	3
5-46	1
Ann 1-3	2
Western Roundup DELL, 1952	
1	165
2	120
3-5	75
6-10	65
11-17	55
18	65
19-23	55
24	60
25	80
What If...? MARVEL, 1977	
1	15
2	10
3-5	8
6-10	5
11-12	4
13	5
14-15	4
16	3
17	4
18-26	3
27	5
What If...? CONTINUED	
28	8
29	3
30-31	8
32-34	3
35	5
36-45	3
46	4
47	3
Special 1	4
What If...? MARVEL, 1989	
-1	2
1	4
2-20	3
21-23	2
24	4
25	4
26-30	3
31-49	2
50	3
51-104	2
105	12
106-114	3
Where Creatures Roam MARVEL, 1970	
1	25
2-8	10
Where Monsters Dwell MARVEL, 1970	
1	32
2-5	10
6-11	8
12	10
13-31	8
32-38	7
Whiz Comics FAWCETT, 1940	
1	70000
➥1st Captain Marvel	
2	5200
3	3400
4	2800
5	2250
6	1650
7	1725
8-9	1650
10	1250
11-12	1100
13-14	1075
15	1250
16-18	1100
19-20	750
21	800
22-24	600
25	6200
➥1st Capt. Marvel Jr.	
26	550
27-30	525
31-32	460
33	525
34	365
35	410
36-40	365
41-43	260
44	300
45-50	260
51-60	210
61-70	175

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

Unslabbed (loose) Very Fine/Near Mint is **5/6 (83%)** of the unslabbed NM price above
Very Fine (VF) is **2/3 (67%)** of NM
Fine (F) is **1/3 (33%)** of NM
Very Good (VG) is **1/5 (20%)** of NM
Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

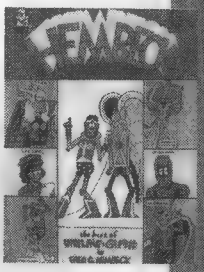
Flashbacks

After the Silver Age ...

30 yrs MAR 11 1979 The Los Angeles Times Syndicate begins syndication of a ***Star Wars*** comic strip by **Russ Manning**.

30 yrs MAR 25 1979 **Tom Batiuk** gives ***Funky Winkerbean*** character **John Darling** his own comic strip, drawn by **Tom Armstrong**.

30 yrs MARCH 1979 ***Hembeck*** is the first collection of the cartoons of **Fred Hembeck**. The 44-page black-and-white magazine has a print run of 5,000 copies.



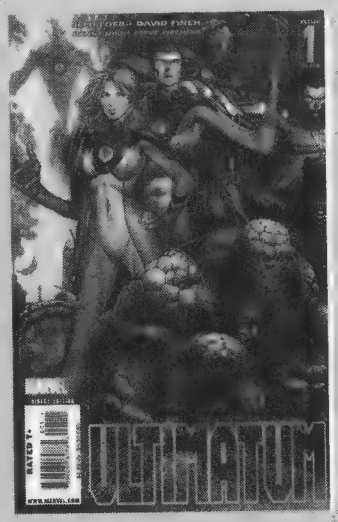
25 yrs MAR 7 1984 **Carl Burgos**, who created **The Human Torch** for Marvel's Golden Age, dies of cancer at age 66. Of course, that wasn't his only comic-book work, and his later comics jobs include M.F. Enterprises' 1966 grotesque **Captain Marvel** character, whose super-power was splitting off body parts.

20 yrs MAR 31 1989 Artist, animator, writer, and editor **Mike Sekowsky** dies from complications of diabetes. He worked for Marvel in the 1940s and later worked for a number of different comic-book publishers, producing (with writer **Gardner Fox**) the 1960s **Justice League of America** stories for DC.

20 yrs MARCH 1989 Innovation's first titles ship to comics stores. Innovative Corporation is partly funded by a grant from a venture capital fund.

20 yrs MARCH 1989 DC announces its first creator-owned series, ***Skreemer*** by **Peter Milligan** and **Brett Ewins**. The six-issue series features a future post-apocalyptic world of gangs and those who control them.

20 yrs MARCH 1989 **Robert Rogovin** of Four Color Comics buys the Mile High copy of ***Detective Comics*** #27 (with the first appearance of Batman) for "just under $100,000." Rob Larsen's "It's All Just Comics" says today that Mastro sold the copy in the early 2000s (CGC-graded at 8.0) for $278,190.



Ultimatum #1
Marvel

$3.99, color, 32 pgs.
Writer: Jeph Loeb
Artist: David Finch
reviewed by **Andrew Wahl**

★★

The stakes are high on *Ultimatum.* Not one, not two, but *three* mini-series — as well as five annuals — led up to this first issue. Add the $3.99 per issue price for the actual series, and readers have every right to expect some major payoff.

What they get, instead, is more set-up. Some nice character moments, sure. And a fair amount of man vs. nature action. All leading up to a big, last-page reveal — that's been in all the ads, promos, and trailers. Anticlimax, anyone?

After years of perfecting their current brand of decompressed storytelling, such modern writers as Jeph Loeb need to start thinking *re*compression. The bang-for-the-buck ratio is out of whack in today's comics. What's there is good — there just isn't enough of it.

Decompression hurts the art, too. David Finch is a fine penciller, and he renders the Ultimate characters well. But the script gives him zero opportunity to display storytelling chops, calling for fewer than four panels per page on average.

If the monthly comics format is to survive, it needs to deliver more entertainment value.

www.marvel.com

RETROVIEW
Young All-Stars #30 ★★★

"Sons of Dawn, Part 3: When Titans Make War ..."

Dyna-Mite faces Hugo Danner's super-powered army by himself, while Fury contemplates how to get to South America to help her friends.

Being the series' penultimate issue, this story really doesn't advance the overall plot for the most part. Again, the opportunity to learn more of Hugo Danner's life is passed by, as Roy and Dann Thomas seem more interested in wrapping up the series.

The responses to the letters this issue almost seem bitter, although that's to be understood when the series is on its way out. Still, making a game effort might ensure a return someday.

DC • Oct 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Lou Manna
Inks: Bob Downs, Dan Simons
Cover: Manna, Downs

No CGC copies

Then $1.75 NOW $2

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Whiz Comics CONTINUED	
71-82	150
83-100	130
101-120	110
121-152	100
153-155	200
WildC.A.T.s IMAGE, 1992	
0	3
1	4
WildC.A.T.s CONTINUED	
1/3D	5
1/Gold	10
1/Variant	5
2-10	3
11	15
11/Holofoil	22
12	8
13	6
14-24	3
25	5
26-49	3
50	4
50/Variant	5
Ann 1	3
Special 1	4
Wild Frontier CHARLTON, 1955	
1	60
2-6	40
7	50
Witchblade IMAGE, 1995	
½	15
1	25
1/B	15
2	18
2/A	15
3	10
4-5	8
6-10	6
10/Dynamic	20
10/Variants	28
11-14	4
14/Gold	6
15	4
16-18/A	3
18/Am Ent	5
19-24	3
24/Variant	5
25	3
25/A	4
25/B	8
25/C	15
26-29	3
29/Variant	5
30-32	3
32/Variant	15
33-41	3
41/A	10
42-49	3
50	5
50/Dynamic	15
50/Autographed	30
50/Variants	5
51-74	3
75-75/Variant	5
76-80	3
80/Holiday	5
80/Variants	3
80/Conv	5
81-91	3
92	5
93-99	3
100/All	5
101-102	3
500	5
Witches Tales HARVEY, 1951	
1	310
2	260
3-10	210
11-16	190
17-19	225
20-24	190
25-28	165
Witching Hour DC, 1969	
1	150
2	70
3	50
4-6	25
7	18
8-13	15
14-51	10
52-66	8
67-85	5
Wolverine MARVEL, 1982	
1	25
2	18
3	17
4	16
Wolverine MARVEL, 1988	
-1	2
½	3
½/Ltd.	8
1	10
2	6
3-5	5
6	4
7-9	5
10	8
11-14	4
15	5
16-19	4
20	5
21-23	4
24-40	3
41	4
42	2
43	3
44	2
45-49	3
50	4
51-56	2
57	3
58-74	2
75	4
76-79	2
80	8
81-84	2
85	3
85/Variant	4
86-87	2
87/Deluxe	4
88	2
88/Deluxe	4
89	2
89/Deluxe	4
90	2
90/Deluxe	4
91-98	2
99	4
100	5
100/Variant	8
101-124	2
125	4
125/A-125/B	10
126-130	2
131	5
131/A	3
132-133	2
133/Variant	4
134-144	2
145	4
145/Gold foil	25
145/DF	50
145/Silver foil	30
145/Nabisco	400
146	5
147-149	2
150	3
150/Dynamic	14
151-165	2
166	3
167-189	2
Ann 1995	4
Ann 1996-Ann 1997	3
Ann 1999-Ann 2000	4
Ann 2001	3
Special 1	4
Wolverine MARVEL, 2003	
1	7
2	5
3	4
4-9	3
10	2
11-15	3
16	2
17	3
18-20	2
20/Variant	90
➥Retailer incentive	
20/Texas	20
➥Texas con premium	
21-26	2
26/Silvestri	15
26/DF	20
27	2
27/Quesada	25
28-29	2
30-35	3
36	5
36/Quesada	12
37-41	3
42	12
43-49	3
50	4
Wolverine: Origins MARVEL, 2006	
1-24	3
Wolverine: The End MARVEL, 2004	
1	7
1/Texas	15
2	6
3	5
4	4
5-6	3
Wolverine: The Origin MARVEL, 2001	
1	25
1/Dynamic	50
2	12
2/Dynamic	24
3	8
3/Dynamic	20
4	5
4/Dynamic	20
5	4
5/Dynamic	20
6	5
6/Dynamic	20
Wonder Woman DC, 1942	
1	17000
2	3100
3	1900
4	1200
5	1050
6-10	900
11-20	650
21-23	450
24	600
25	450
26-30	425
31-40	415
41-44	400
45	500
46-50	400
51-60	310
61-70	240
71-79	190
80-90	155
91-100	120
101-104	90
105	600
➥1st Wonder Girl	
106-110	80
111-130	70
131-149	56
150-159	50
160-161	30
162	40
163-170	30
171-180	25
181-190	33
191-200	40
201-210	14
211	25
➥100-page issue	
212-213	11
214	30
➥100-page issue	
215-218	11
219-236	7
237-260	6
261-268	5
269-279	4
280	3
281-283	5
284-299	3
300	6
301-329	3
Wonder Woman DC, 1987	
0	6
1	4
2-10/A	3
11-84	2
85	10
➥1st Deodato art	
86	4
87-93	3
94-99	2
100	3
100/Variant	4
101-119	2
120	3
121-139	2
139/Ltd.	15
140-199	2
200	4
201-213	2
214	25
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
215	10
216	7
217	6
218	5
219	15
➥Max Lord dies	
219/2nd	3
➥2nd print	
220	12
221-1000000	3
Ann 1-2	2
Ann 3	3
Ann 4	4
Ann 5	3
Ann 6	4
Ann 7-8	3
Special 1	2
Woody Woodpecker DELL, 1952	
16-20	14
21-50	12
51-72	9
73-75	25
76-100	15
101-120	10
121-130	6
131-170	3
171-187	2
188-189	10
190-191	25
193-201	15
World's Best Comics DC, 1941	
1	18000
World's Finest Comics DC, 1941	
2	4000
3	2900
4-5	1975
6-7	1450
8	1275
9	1300
10	1050
11-16	895
17	875
18-20	805
21-30	610
31-40	530
41-60	430
61-64	320
65	540
66-70	370
71	900
➥1st Sup/Bat team	
72-73	550
74-80	375
81-90	235
91-93	175
94	525
➥Sup/Bat team origin	
95-99	175
100	260
101-110	105
111-121	85
122-142	75
143-150	52
151-152	50
153-155	45
156	55
➥Bizarro, Joker app.	
157-161	45
162-177	38
178-180	30

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER GRADES

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Good (G) is **1/8 (12.5%)** of NM

Young All-Stars #31 ★★

"Sons of Dawn, Part 4: Men ... and Super-Men"

The entire All-Star Squadron is called into action to stop Hugo Danner's army, but nature lends a hand, as well.

The series ends not with a bang, but a whimper, as a cliché is brought into play to lay the super-powered Indians low. The creative team's hearts don't seem to be in this final issue with art that's almost unrecognizable in spots, miscolored and misidentified characters (unless Firebrand became Mrs. Johnny Quick post-*Crisis*), and an open ending that leaves plenty of room for another series. Sadly, that wasn't to be. Of The Young All-Stars, only "Iron" Munro has made later appearances.

DC • Nov 1989 • 24 pp.
Writers: Roy and Dann Thomas
Pencils: Lou Manna
Inks: Bob Downs, Ken Branch
Cover: Manna, Downs

In Near Mint copies: **Then $1.75 NOW $2**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

181-190 25
191-197 20
➥Sup/Flash race
198-199 80
➥Sup/Flash race
200-212 16
213-228 14
229-270 6
271-300 4
301-323 3

Worlds of Fear
FAWCETT, 1952
2 325
3 250
4-9 200
10 475

Worlds Unknown
MARVEL, 1973
1 17
2 10
3 7
4-8 5

Xenozoic Tales
KITCHEN SINK, 1987
1 8
2-5 6
6-10 5
11-14 4

X-Factor
MARVEL, 1986
-1 2
1 3
2-4 2
5 3
6 5
7 3
8-22 2
23 5
24 8
25-49 2
50-53 3
54-59 2
60-69 3
70-91 2
92 4
93-105 2
106/Variant ... 3
107-124 2
125 3
126-129 2
130 3
131-149 2
Ann 1-6 3
Ann 7 2
Ann 8-9 3

X-Files
TOPPS, 1995
-2--1 10
0/A-0/C 4
1 8
2 5
3-4 4
5-33 3
33/Variant 5
34-41/Variant .. 3
Ann 1-Ashcan 1 4
Special 1-5 5

X-Force
MARVEL, 1991
-1-1/E 2
2 3
3-24 2
25 3
26-30 2
31-33 1
34-38 2
38/Variant 3
39-49/Deluxe .. 2
50 3
50/A 4
51-98 2
99 3
100-129 2
Ann 1-Ann 3 ... 3
Ann 1995 4
Ann 1996-Ann 1997 3
Ann 1998-Ann 1999 4

X-Man
MARVEL, 1995
-1 2
1-4 3
5-14 2
15 3
16-24 2
25 3
26-74 2
75 3
Ann '96-'98 ... 4

X-Men
MARVEL, 1963
1 7000
➥1st X-Men
2 1900
3 1030
4 900
5 550
6 500
7 475
8-10 360
11 300
12 500
➥1st Juggernaut
13 275
14 250
15-16 190
17-20 100
21-27 90
28 155
➥1st Banshee
29-34 90
35 150
➥Spider-Man app.
36-37 65
38 80
39-40 90
41-48 65
49-51 75
52 65
53-57 72
58 100
➥1st Havok
59-65 70
66 80
➥Last new issue
67-80 35
81-85 40
86-93 35
94 500
➥2nd New X-Men
95 85
➥Thunderbird dies
96 55
97-98 48
98/30¢ 125
99 48
99/30¢ 125
100 60
➥Phoenix orig. starts
100/30¢ 135
101 55
➥Phoenix origin
102-105 28
105/35¢ 60
106 28
106/35¢ 60
107 28
107/35¢ 60
108 35
➥1st Byrne X-Men
109 30
➥1st Weapon alpha
110-115 20
116-119 16
➥1st Alpha Flight
120-121 28
122-128 12
129 20
130-135 12
136 11
137 14
➥Phoenix dies
138 8
139-141 11
➥Future Past

X-Men
MARVEL, 1991
-1 3
-1/A 4
1/Beast 5
1/Colossus 3
1/Cyclops 4
1/Magneto 3
1/Collector's ... 5
2 4
3-20 3
21-24 2
25 5
25/Gold 25
25/Ltd. 30
26-29 2
30 3
31-49 2
50 3
50/Variant 4
51-54 2
54/Silver 25
55-62 2
62/A 3
63-79 2
80 3
80/Holofoil ... 10
80/DF 7
81-98 2
99-100/G 3
101-104 2
105 3
106-113 2
114 5
115-144 2
145-147 3
148 2
149 3
150 4
151 3
152 2
153-157 3
158 2
159 3
160-164 2
165 3
166-169 2
170-Ann 3 3
Ann 1995 4
Ann '96-'98 ... 3
Ann '99-'01 ... 4
Ashcan 1 1

X-Men: Age of Apocalypse
MARVEL, 2005
1 4
2-6 3

X-O Manowar
VALIANT, 1992
0 2
0/Gold 35
½ 8
½/Gold 55
1 7
2-4 6
5 5
6 4
7-8 3
9 2
10-15 1
15/Pink 8
16-27 1
28 2
29-35 1
36 2
37-41 1
42-54 2
55-62 3
63-65 4
66 5
67 7
68 12
YB 1 4

Young Allies Comics
TIMELY, 1941
1 11500
2 3000
3 2100
4 3000
5 1300
6-8 875
9 900
10 875
11-14 720
15-20 615

Young Avengers
MARVEL, 2005
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Tony's Back Page

Action Comics #100

With this issue, *Tony's Back Page* switches from sterling tales of my life to extended coverage of comic books scheduled to appear in my forthcoming book, *1,000 Comic Books You Must Read*. Because I'll use any excuse to read and write about great and not-so-great comic books that I find.

***Action Comics* #100**
Writer: Alvin Schwartz
Artist: Ira Yarbrough
Cover artists: Wayne Boring and Ed Dobrotka
DC (Sep 46 © 1946 National Periodical Publications)

In "The Sleuth Who Never Failed," Scotland Yard's Inspector Hawkins is determined to prove Clark Kent is Superman. It's the first of several such attempts Hawkins will make, with the last one coming in 1952. The story is notable, because it established the template for the nigh-countless "Lois tries to prove Clark is Superman" tales of later decades. It was written by the remarkable and prolific Alvin Schwartz, who wrote hundreds of DC scripts, including a long run on the *Superman* newspaper strip. He also wrote *The Blowtop*, a 1948 novel that sparked the "beat" movement of the era. Schwartz left comics in 1958 for a career in corporate market research and then a second career writing documentaries for the National Film Board of Canada. His most recent works include *An Unlikely Prophet*, a metaphysical autobiography that puts forth the idea that The Man of Steel's worldwide renown has given the character a reality beyond his fictional adventures.

This issue also features Hayfoot Harry, a humorous detective series written by Schwartz and drawn by Stan Kaye, along with such *Action Comics* stalwarts as Congo Bill, Vigilante, and Zatara the Magician.

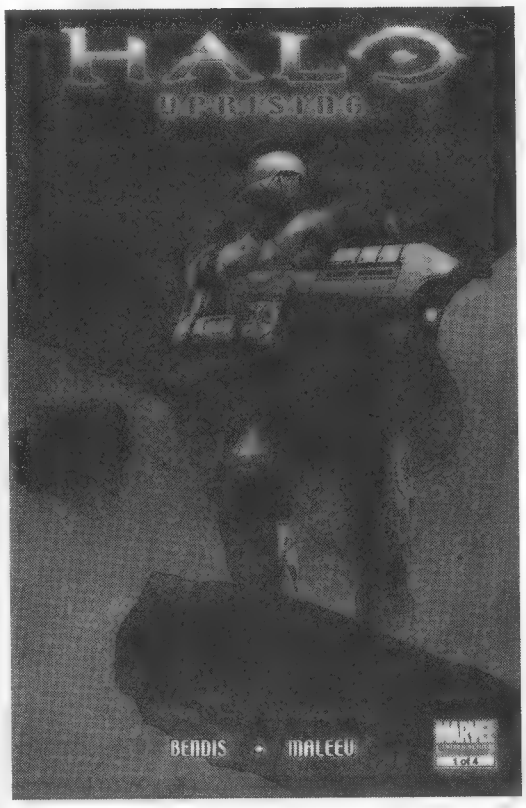
None of the stories in this issue have been reprinted.

— ***Tony Isabella***

Videogame-related comics playing well with gamers

by **WILLIAM INSIGNARES**

Have you ever had one of those days when you were thrust into the middle of a battlefield to fight warriors from outer space and you were completely surrounded by killer creatures and low on ammo? But in reality, you were just sitting on a specially constructed chair, with a controller that looked like a weapon, and were bombarded with 3-D visuals and surround sound that felt like the closest thing to actually *being* in that situation — even if only for a few brief moments? This is just one of thousands of scenarios that could develop while playing a videogame. It's no wonder that, with such excitement and colorful imagery, the videogame industry has become a very lucrative business. Recently, CNN reported that overall sales for videogame retail sales through November 2008 were more than $16 billion, up 22% from the previous year.



As consumers continue to weigh entertainment spending, the videogame world seems to be one of the few industries that haven't been negatively affected by the faltering economy. Many industry analysts will agree that, in times like these, the escapism that videogame play provides is exactly what many people are looking for. While comic books continue to be a great source of escapist entertainment, the sell-through on comics versus videogames is not even comparable, as some videogame titles sell in the millions, while the top three titles in comics for any given month barely break the 100,000 mark each.

Nevertheless, there is an unmistakable correlation between comics and videogames, as both forms of entertainment continue through good times and bad. Blockbuster movies based on both have helped solidify many properties as excellent earners and made them household names.

Videogame-related comics are not a new concept, but there are a growing number of new titles based on hit games. Many comics retailers are reporting that they have seen shoppers who are also videogame players: those shoppers coming into their stores for the first time and asking for these issues. Several of these adaptations and tie-ins are being well received by both hard-core comics readers and videogame players. You may want to look for these at your local comics shop:

Gears of War. Based on the award-winning videogame by Epic Games, DC's WildStorm imprint has done an excellent job of adapting this popular game into comics. The story centers on the soldiers of Delta Squad and their never-ending battle to save humanity on the planet of Sera from an underground alien enemy known as The Locust Horde. The six-issue mini-series bridges the gap between the first *Gears of War* game and the second. The plan was to fuel the excitement for the highly anticipated release of the second videogame by adding to the comics content to which gamers had not been privy before, bringing them to comics stores and further fanning the flames of enthusiasm for the upcoming game. The series was well received and the first issue sold out instantly. There is even a variant that sells for $20-$25 and a Blockbuster Video-exclusive variant that sells for around $15.

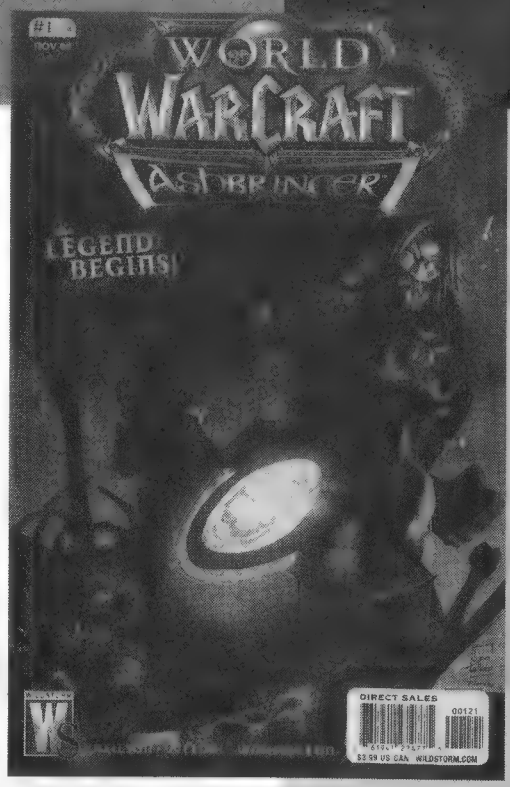
Halo Uprising. Based on the popular game by Bungie Studios, the first issue of the comic book sold well, and a previous graphic novel sold out almost overnight. This led to the new series, which should have concluded

long ago but, due to numerous delays, has gamers and readers wondering whether the final issue will be worth the wait. The story begins where *Halo 2* left off, and (as in *Gears of War*) soldiers must fight an alien threat known as The Covenant. This time, the battlefield is Earth, and there is an important key located in Cleveland — a key that the aliens want and will stop at nothing to retrieve — while Master Chief and his forces attempt to put a final end to the deadly Covenant.

World of Warcraft. Hailed by many as one of the most popular videogames in the world, this adaptation, also by DC/WildStorm, has been *so* successful that a second mini-series, *World of Warcraft: Ashbringer*, was published to help supply the demand. While the first several issues of *World of Warcraft* are sold out and continue to be reprinted, first printings can be found at comics stores and conventions. Average prices on back issues may be at least two to three times the original cover price. There have been several variants, including a limited-edition version that was given to comics retailers at a Baltimore conference. The average cost on these is around $50. There is no way to sum up what the complex and ever-evolving *World of Warcraft* is, but this series touches on the carefully constructed peace treaty between the Alliance and Horde and all its ramifications and colorful characters.

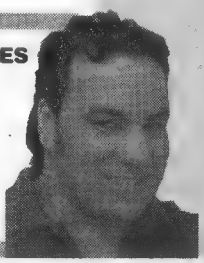
Street Fighter. From Udon Entertainment, this well-liked property is back with two series: *Street Fighter II Turbo* and *Street Fighter Legends: Chun Li.* Each focuses on core Street Fighter characters that have been emulated in movies, cartoons, animation, and action figures. The Chun Li series is a prequel to the upcoming movie.

Resident Evil. From the highly successful monster property that has resulted in three movies and countless licenses for a diverse amount of merchandise comes a new series from WildStorm. The storyline is set as a prequel to the release of *Resident Evil 5.* This start of the six-issue mini-series has a release date of March 11, and the first issue has a variant cover by Brandon Badeaux. Also scheduled to coincide with the release is the trade paperback for the sold-out *Resident Evil: Fire and Ice.* This compilation will be limited to 5000 copies.



As fun and exciting as are many videogames, many well-written comics (including those related to videogames) are also fun and imaginative. More and more gamers are learning that the perfect blend of excitement and escapism may be found in more than videogames alone. One after the other, those gamers are putting down their joysticks and headphones and pausing to introduce (or reintroduce) themselves to the wonderful world of reading. And that's happening while they still enjoy those far-away worlds with incredible characters that they have come to know and care for.

Comics specialist **WILLIAM INSIGNARES** owns 4 stores in Tampa, Fla., and *DemolitionComics.com*, which he bills as "The world's first multi-lingual international comics super-store." He can be contacted at (813) 832-2692 or *info@demolitioncomics.com.*



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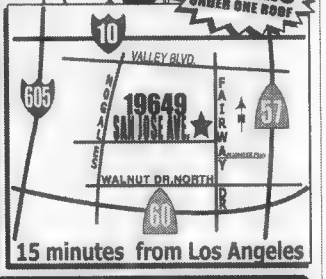

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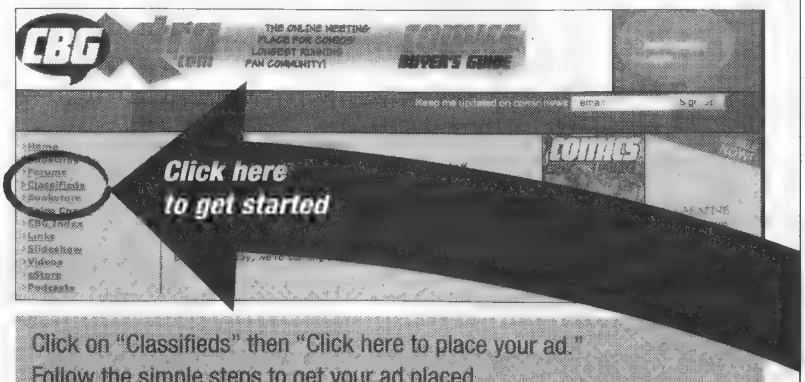

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As part of our expansion program,our company is looking for part time Work from home account managers,sales and payment representatives,it pays a minimum of $3000 a month plus benefits and takes only little of your time.Please contact us for more details.Requirements -Should be a computer Literate.2-3 hours access to the internet weekly.Must be Honest and Loyal.Must be Efficient and Dedicated.If you are interested and need more information,Contact Michael J Sloan, Email: mjsloan01@aol.com 3991489

4101 ARCHIE, WANTED

LOOKING FOR Archie Comic's Mad House Comic with appearances of Sabrina the Teenage Witch/ various issues wanted. Darren, 1618 74th Ave., Oakland, CA 94621. 510-875-0037. cfw2670367

WANTED ARCHIE 1968 TV cartoon show with multiple shows on each DVD or VHS tape also featuring Sabrina. Darren, 1618 74th Ave., Oakland, CA 94621. 510-875-0037. cfw2670368

4110 BLACK & WHITE, FOR SALE

WARREN BOOKS, Creepy, Eerie, Vampirella, Rook, Spirit, others. Send wants edwin1000@optonline.net 335 Farrington Blvd., North Brunswick, NJ 08902. cfw2723251

4120 CLASSIC, FOR SALE

CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED #13 Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde, mint, HRN #62, 1st ten pages off center. S. Berdy, details 315-879-8159. cfw2724002

4122 COMIC COLLECTIONS FOR SALE

100 DIFFERENT NM 80/90's comics $54 ppd.! Marvel, DC, Indy's! E-Bay = bubbasbooks .99 deals! Vince Lavarello, 13350 NE 17th Ave., Trenton, FL 32693. cfw2629328

100 NM 80/90s store stock! $50 ppd 352-493-9242 Lavarello 13350 NE 17th Ave Trenton, FL 32693. Ebay & Alibris= bubbasbooks vjlava@bellsouth.net cfw2720338

COMICS, CARDS, DVDs, hardcovers, softcovers and more! Mostly comic book related items for sale! Send SASE: Kim Klein, 6516 Mardel Ave., St. Louis, MO 63109-1224. cfw2670566

WWW.BIDONCOMICS.COM Buy Comics: No Buyer s Premium - Sell Comics: Low Listing Fees with No FVF. High Grade CGC Silver/Bronze to Modern Comics. Marvel/DC/Independents. 3968137

4123 COMIC COLLECTIONS WANTED

BUYING WAR Comics-1940-85, poor, fair-VG condition; all D.C., Marvel Atlas, etc. Titles. Send list, prices, or my offer. Don Deluca, PO Box 581, Cranbury, NJ 08512. 609-203-1900 cfw2720264

4130 DC, FOR SALE

40 DC War Comics, 1950s, coverless, Our Army At War, Our Fighting Forces, All American-Men of War, etc. $100 plus shipping. Terry 215-627-7258. cfw2664184

4131 DC, WANTED

BUYING LOW grade DC's = 1940-1980, any condition, Superman, Batman, all titles. Send list, prices. Don Deluca, POB 581, Cranbury, NJ 08512. 609-203-1900. delucadon@yahoo.com cfw2724168

4150 DISNEY, FOR SALE

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4151 DISNEY, WANTED

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4161 EC, WANTED

BUYING E.C. Color Reprints, all titles, famous monsters, comic book marketplace, alter-ego. Older comic reprints. Don Deluca, POB 581, cranbury, NJ 08512. cfw2724199

4170 FAWCETT, FOR SALE

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4191 HARVEY, WANTED

WANTED DICK Tracy comics for resale. All companies. Please write Benders, 22 S. Mallory St, Hampton, VA 23663. bendersbooks@cox.net 757-723-3741. cfw2728520

4210 MARVEL/TIMELY, FOR SALE

10 ATLAS Jungle Comics, coverless, Jungle Tales, Jungle Action, Lorna, etc. $35 plus shipping. Terry 215-627-7258. cfw2664185

103 MARVEL Comics for sale - 20% off! Call or write for details. Michael Piermatteo, 115 Pond St., Apt. 1, Waltham, MA 02451-4505. 781-373-3155. cfw2663759

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KA-ZOR (1974). #3, 5 (NM) $4; 9-11 (NM) $3 each. Kull (73) 10 (VF) $4; J.Carter Annual #3 (NM) $2. P&H $4.50. Allen Schuler, 7506 Appletree Way, Louisville, KY 40228. cfw2724206

M. SPOTLIGHT #2 F(+) Guide $69, sale $49! I. Hulk #3 Pr/Fr $99, X-Men #89 VF- Guide $42.50, sale $39. S/H $2.50. 941-258-5475. Damian Bate, 1660 Eagle St., Port Charlotte, FL 33952. cfw2663750

X-MEN #53 F/VF nice! $44.50, I. Hulk #102 VF/NM sharp! $239, S. Surfer #4 CGC 5.5 $119. S/H $2.50 per order. Damian Bate, 1660 Eagle St., Port Charlotte, FL 33952. cfw2663749

4211 MARVEL/TIMELY, WANTED

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4220 SCIENCE FICTION/HORROR FOR SALE

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4240 UNDERGROUND, FOR SALE

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4260 WESTERNS, FOR SALE

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JACE PEARSON Texas Ranger VG+ 26, FC648 VG 14, #7 G-VG 11, #8 VG-F 18, others. Billy Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71047. 318-925-6654. cfw2723701

RED RYDER #20 VG-F $53, #26 F+ $50, #27 VG-F $38, #28 F- $40, others $6 postage. Billy Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71037, 318-925-6654. cfw2469928

RIN TIN TIN #6 VG $14, #9 VG-F $17, #10 F $21, #14 VG/F $15, and others. $5 postage. Billy Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71047. 318-925-6654. cfw2513464

SMILEY BURNETT #1 G $38; #2 P-Fair $15; #3 F $75; #4 G $25; others. $5 postage. Billy Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71047. 318-925-6654. cfw2581007

4261 WESTERNS, WANTED

TEXAS KID #3, 6, 8. Red Ryder #43. Gun Fighters #78. Ben Ogburn, PO Box 191, Blue Ridge, VA 24064. cfw2663779

4300 GOLDEN AGE, FOR SALE

BATMAN #102 VG+ 85, #103 VG-F 99, #108 F 115, #109 VG 76, #113 VG-F 82, others. Shirley Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71047. 318-925-6654. cfw2723697

BATMAN #43 Fair-G $85, #40 G+ $145, #45 G-TA $70, #47 Fair $200, and others $6 postage. Shirley Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71037, 318-925-6654. cfw2469933

BATMAN #77 Fine condition, $375. Stephen Berdy, PO Box 506, Newark, NY 14513. 315-879-8159. cfw2724001

BATMAN NO.1 Spring 1940. Fair condition. Tears & creases, tape on cover, corner piece off back cover. $6750. Affordable copy. hayley1946@aol.com 407-870-0400. cfw2663783

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NO.1 1945 Hi-Lite Comics VG-FN $45, insurance, first class, included. Book is tight, tan. supple. John Schumacher, 3003 N Oconto Ave., Chicago, IL 60707. cfw2728527

NO.1 1947 Candy 48 pages G+. Stories complete. $40 includes insurance first class. John Schumacher, 3003 N Oconto Ave., Chicago, IL 60707. cfw2728521

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WANTED LADY Luck Comics, National Comics Number 42, 48, 49, anything I don't have by Klus Nordling-mysto99@aol.com cfw2613507

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HEY KIDS! Comics for sale! Silver Age to the Present. Send wantlist: The Funnies Farm, 1A Ward St., Suffern, NY 10901. E-mail: msgr4289@aol.com cfw2730192

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WALLY WOOD'S 'Gangbang' books, #1-3 all for $45 + $5. Art of Al Williamson. 1983 $15 + $4. Richard Bassford, 31 Ginger Place, Cold Spring, NY 10516. cfw2629357

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4453 SCIENCE FICTION, WANTED

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ROCKET'S BLAST-COMICOLLECTOR #63, 76, 78, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88. Ben Ogburn, PO Box 191, Blue Ridge, VA 24064. cfw2663780

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"The single most terrifying, challenging, and daunting thing"

Having fun with an industry icon

by MAGGIE THOMPSON

Michael Uslan told me, "I'm having fun." His Branded Entertainment has been involved in comics-associated projects for years, and his own love for the field goes back to the 1950s, when he read comics as a kid. In the years since he was captivated by a tour of the DC offices as a young fan, he has taught a course on comics (and written an accompanying textbook), produced movies and TV shows (with credits including Batman films from 1989 to date, *Swamp Thing*, and the recently released *The Spirit*, among many other projects), and has even donated 45,000 comics to Indiana University's Lilly Library.

When we talked in January, however, he was definitely having fun. For one thing, he cited "the terrific accolades *Dark Knight* is receiving." For another, he said, "Movies that happen to be based on comic books are at last being perceived by critics and the public (as well as Academy voters) to be worthy of award recognition. Of *The Dark Knight*, we may now say not that it's a great comic-book movie, but simply that it's a great film."

The Spirit
I THOUGHT YOU WERE A PHYSICIST, SILKEN!...IS THE COOL DR. FLOSS A TRIPLE THREAT PLAYER??
SURGERY IS A NECESSITY IN MY MORE ADVANCED STUDIES...AH, DR. QUAVER, RECOVERED SO SOON..??
I...I'M SORRY DR. FLOSS...I'M SORRY I FAINTED.. ...BEEN ILL...

Topping it off is an upcoming three-issue story arc for DC's *The Spirit* that will begin with #26, written by the team of Michael Uslan and FJ DeSanto.

Asked how he had come to the project, FJ DeSanto, who has worked with Michael for many years, replied, "I got asked." He continued, "I think Michael knew my lifelong desire to write comics, being a fanboy. I had contributed to an anthology issue of *Star Trek* comics for Tokyopop and went right from that into *The Spirit*. Right out of the gate, I got to do these classic properties.

"The reaction to being asked if I wanted to do it was, initially, 'Of course!' and then, 'Oh, geez!' "

The Spirit, of course, was created by Will Eisner as a feature for a Sunday newspaper supplement, the first installment published to accompany newspapers for June 2, 1940. I think the article I wrote for *The Comic-Book Book* in the early 1970s may have been the first article on the feature aimed at a comic-book audience. Today, thanks to DC's Archives project, a new generation of readers can finally read the classic Eisner project virtually in its entirety. And, for more than a year, DC has been publishing an ongoing series of *new* stories featuring the masked man who fights crime in Central City.

Batman/The Spirit (Jan 07) was written by Jeph Loeb and drawn by Darwyn Cooke and J. Bone. That was quickly followed by DC's new series, *The Spirit*, beginning with a story written and pencilled by Cook and inked by Bone — and the dynamite team of Mark Evanier and Sergio Aragonés took over scripting with #14 (Mar 08).

Now, there's a three-parter in the works by Uslan, who termed it "the single most terrifying, challenging, and daunting thing I have ever done in my career: to follow in the footsteps of Will Eisner and Darwyn Cooke. I was quaking in my boots but as excited as could be."

He and FJ approached the challenge systematically. "FJ and I sat down and listed every trademark of what we'd expect to find in a classic Eisner story in order to follow those elements closely." They identified: "the mystery, the playful handling of the logo, the sense of humor, The Spirit being beaten to a pulp but with a tongue-in-cheek approach, the character-

SPIRIT FEMMES

Original publication and
DC's *Archives* volumes and *The Spirit: Femmes Fatales*

1947 Mar 2 **Silken Floss** #1 "A Granule of Time" *DCA* #14
1947 Mar 9 **Silken Floss** #2 "Silken Floss, M.D." *DCA* #14
1947 Sep 14 **Silken Floss** #3 "Into the Light" *DCA* #15
1948 Sep 19 **Lorelei Rox** "Lorelei Rox" *DCA* #17
1948 Nov 7 **Plaster of Paris** "Plaster of Paris" *DCA* #17
1951 Sep 23 **Silken Floss** #4 "Stony Keefer" (written by Jules Feiffer) *DCA* #23

driven plot, the social commentary, the cinematic storytelling, and a careful selection from a rogues' gallery of villains including *femmes fatales*."

Michael paused, then continued, "And — very important, though some people don't get it — it *had* to be *contemporary*."

Many fans think of Eisner's *The Spirit* as set in the specific era of the 1940s and 1950s. Michael said, "Will pointed out to me that he *never* wrote *The Spirit* as a period piece. *Whenever* he was working on it, it was contemporary."

The two writers worked with those criteria, as they planned the project.

Next, "FJ and I talked about cinema and what directors we would want to inspire us as we approached the story." They came up with three: Orson Welles, Alfred Hitchcock, and Frank Capra — the last for his "humanity, which, at the core, is what *The Spirit* is about."

FJ said, "Three primary focuses for me in working on *The Spirit* were the adventure, mystery, and romance. It's those elements that made it fun: it had to be cool, we didn't want it to be goofy, and it had to be appealing to contemporary readers, rather than a relic of the past. At the same time, we needed to stay true to Eisner and Darwyn, respecting all the creators who came before.

"Of course, an advantage was that, over the years, few people have touched this property, compared to a character like Batman. You don't have those continuity problems."

They considered who would be involved in the three stories "on the bad guys' side."

Michael said, "We wanted to go back into Eisner's rich rogues' gallery. The most interesting to us were mysteriously underused." (See the sidebar for more information on their original appearances.)

• **Plaster of Paris** "In that original story, Will hinted of a past encounter between The Spirit and Plaster and Inspector Guillotine. We could expand on what Will provided without conflicting with it."

• **Lorelei** "She had been used once and seemed to die — except for the last panel. We wanted to come up with a sequel for that first encounter."

• **Silken Floss** "She had three appearances but was never given a backstory. That gave us a ripe opportunity to expand the character, and we mined it as best we could."

What Michael and FJ came up with are three stand-alone stories. "But," Michael said, "if you read the three together as an arc, the characters become that much further layered and textured. On the other hand, you don't *have* to read them all. And, for that matter, you don't have to know a thing about The Spirit. You can pick up *The Spirit* #26, #27, or #28 and begin right there."

FJ said, "This is a self-contained three-parter, which fleshes out the characters but doesn't wrap up their stories. True fans will enjoy it, but we also hope new readers will be curious about the lore of Central City.

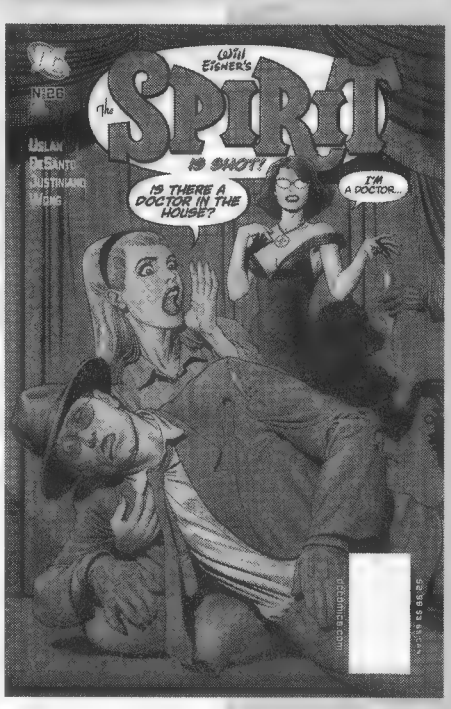
"Coming up with what we were going to do was easy, because Will left the groundwork. Plaster of Paris, for example, had a history with The Spirit that was never explored, giving us the opportunity to pinpoint what we wanted to do."

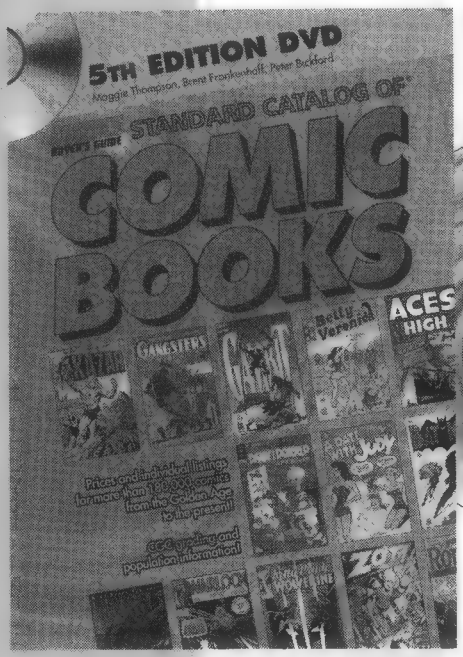
Then, there was the question of the art for the project. Michael said, "God bless Joey Cavalieri, our sainted editor! He brought in Brian Bolland covers for all three issues!" Josue Justiniano and Walden Wong provide the interior art. Michael said, "We gave them three incredibly challenging scripts, and those guys rose to the occasion. What they have done is clearly evoking Will Eisner, telling the story cinematically, and making it very contemporary."

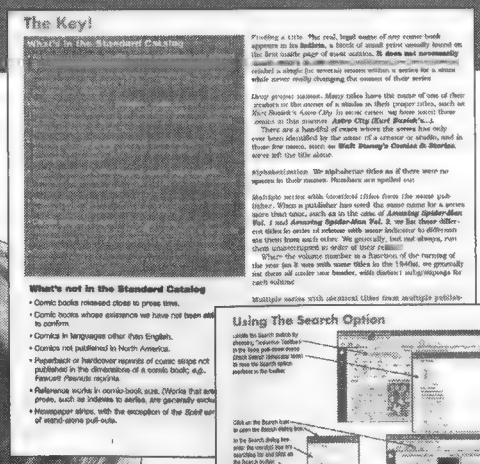
FJ said, "I was familiar with the artists, but I think this will be their next step to bigger things. They've done what we tried to do with the writing: be as respectful as possible and as contemporary as possible. I think they found that perfect balance. It's not like Batman, where you have 70 years of many different artists and interpretations. There was *one* Spirit — limited but challenging — and I think these guys have knocked it out of the park."

Michael concluded, "We couldn't be more excited. The reaction from DC is that reading this three-issue story arc is like reading an Eisner story.

"Now, we hope the readers will sample *The Spirit* #26-28 and come along for a fun and engaging ride."



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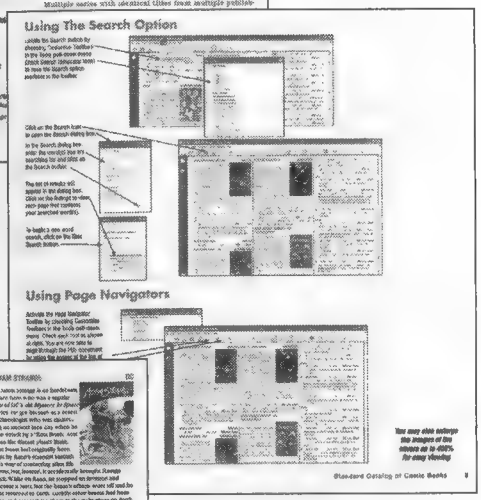
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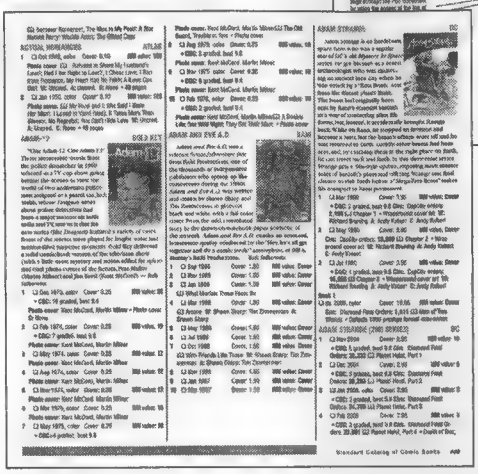

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Since 2006, we've been getting calls requesting a new edition of the tome — a volume that itself had run more than 1,600 pages. Heck, we wanted a new edition for *ourselves*, since we refer to it constantly in researching back issues. But how to do it?

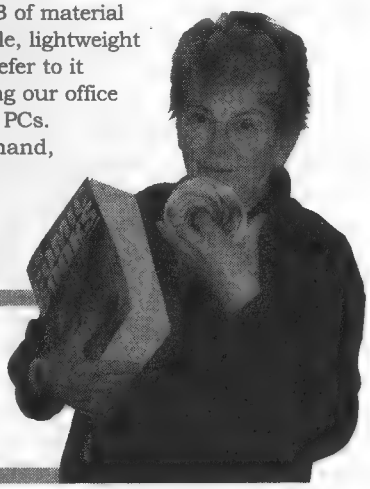
While we bow to none in our affection for the printed page, we knew that few of our fellow collectors could financially (or, in some cases, physically) support a printed volume (or volumes) of such size. We know it can be faster to turn a book's page than to wait for massive chunks of information to load. But we were pretty doggoned happy to be able to make the information available in another way.

The solution we came up with involved the advantages of electronics: We could use a single DVD to store the (gasp) 3,437 pages of a new edition. *And* we could add color. *And* we could add more descriptions of many titles. *And* the material would be searchable.

And (here's the kicker) anyone who wanted to maintain a record on its "pages" as he used to do in earlier editions could do so — and not have to bother with any of the "pages" he didn't need. Because he could print out and mark up the page devoted (for example) to DC's *Titans* without having to lug around information on the 225 issues of St. John's *Tip Top Comics*. He could, in effect, be his own publisher — of a "volume" relating to his own collection. (And if he ever *did* start a *Tip Top* collection, he could print out that information, too.)

There's 1.12 GB of material stored in that single, lightweight disc, and we can refer to it whether we're using our office Macs or our home PCs.

(On the other hand, we can't use this edition to "press" our spine-rolled comics. Dang!)



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MAGGIE THOMPSON is tired of winter. Tired, do you hear? But at least snowbanks outside the house encourage collecting fervor inside, and slowly items are finding themselves in big ol' plastic bags and cozy cardboard boxes. Maggie has her very own blogs at *www.maggiethompson.com* and at *www.CBGXtra.com!*

Edd Cartier

Artist

1914-December 25, 2008

By Anthony Tollin

Edward Daniel Cartier, one of the legendary illustrators from the golden age of pulp fiction, died December 25, 2008, in his Ramsey, N.J., home.

Cartier created more than 800 illustrations for *The Shadow Magazine* and painted five covers and produced more than 200 interior illustrations for *Unknown* and nearly 300 illustrations for *Astounding Science Fiction*. A favorite artist of John W. Campbell and writer L. Ron Hubbard, Cartier also illustrated science-fiction stories by Isaac Asimov, Robert A. Heinlein, Theodore Sturgeon, Clifford D. Simak, and L. Sprague de Camp, horror stories by Robert Bloch, and John D. MacDonald's early mystery fiction.

Cartier began illustrating stories for Street & Smith, a leading publisher of pulp-fiction magazines, while still a student at Brooklyn's Pratt Institute's School of Fine and Applied Arts, where he majored in pictorial illustration and studied under illustrators Harold Winfield Scott and William James, a Street & Smith art director who gave Cartier his first professional assignments.

"I began by doing a single illustration per week for Street & Smith pulps like *Wild West Weekly*, *Movie Action*, and *Detective Story Magazine* while still attending Pratt," he recently recalled, "and was initially paid $8 for each drawing."

Graduating in 1936, Cartier received his first ongoing assignment illustrating The Shadow's adventures. "The regular artist, Tom Lovell, was moving on to pursue a painting career, so I alternated with him illustrating the twice-monthly novels. My first work for *The Shadow Magazine* accompanied 'The Sledge-Hammer Crimes' in the Aug. 1, 1936, issue, coincidentally my 22nd birthday."

Dean Cartier said his father became known as "Edd" because of the response from Shadow fans. He said, "The fans did it ... They'd write to 'Ed. D.,' which became 'Edd,' and my dad liked it ... It became his penname."

In 1939, the editor of Street & Smith's *Astounding Science-Fiction* offered him the opportunity to illustrate *Unknown*, a groundbreaking magazine of horror and supernatural fiction. "John W. Campbell Jr. thought I would be ideally suited to illustrating fantasy. I always enjoyed drawing the weird and fantastic nature of The Shadow's adventures. And John said he had often admired that quality in my illustrations before he asked me to illustrate *Unknown*."

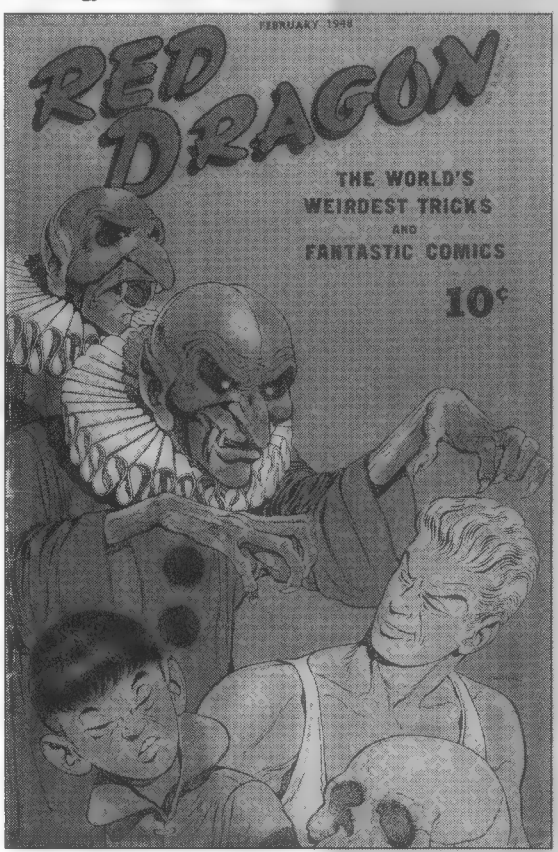
Drafted in 1941, Cartier fought in France and Germany and was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He returned to Street & Smith after the war, illustrating The Shadow, *Astounding*, and Doc Savage, and also producing cover and interior art for *Red Dragon Comics* and *Super-Magician Comics*. His stylish and whimsical illustrations inspired generations of science-fiction artists including Frank Kelly Freas, and comic-book illustrators including Mort Meskin, Batman artists Bob Kane and Jerry Robinson, and E.C.'s Joe Orlando.

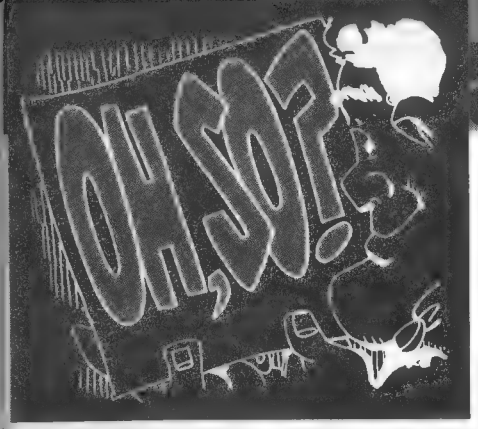
"Cartier was just an amazing artist," observed Mike Grell, longtime illustrator of DC's *Legion of Super-Heroes* and *The Warlord*. "The volume of his work is nothing compared to the quality. I loved his black and white Shadow illustrations — talk about solid. Having to draw for reproduction in the pulps, he made the best use of blacks and, more importantly, whites — like painting with light!"

During the early 1950s, Cartier was the premier artist for the Fantasy Press and Gnome Press book publishers; he was awarded the 1992 World Fantasy Life Achievement Award, the 1990 First Fandom Hall of Fame Award, and 1996 and 2001 retro Hugo Awards. A longtime friend of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, Cartier served for two decades as a judge for the L. Ron Hubbard Illustrators of the Future Contest. In 1994, Cartier attended the world premiere of *The Shadow* movie as a guest of Universal Pictures and was delighted to see the look of his old pulp illustrations brought to life on screen.

Cartier's wife of 65 years, Georgina, had died earlier in 2008. Sons Dean Cartier of Ramsey, N.J., and Kenn Cartier and his wife of Redmond, Wash., survived him.

"I always enjoyed drawing the weird and fantastic nature of The Shadow's adventures." — Edd Cartier





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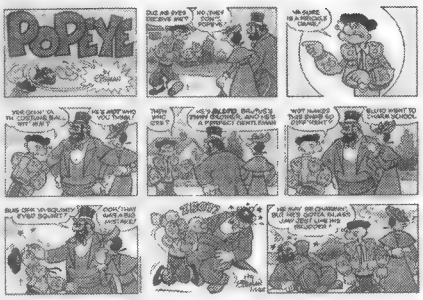

BLUTO ON SUNDAY

Fred M. Grandinetti
Author, ***Popeye: An Illustrated Cultural History,*** *McFarland, 2004*

In the fall of 2008, I let current *Popeye* cartoonist, Hy Eisman, know that Bluto had never appeared in a Sunday strip. The brute appeared in the daily *Thimble Theatre* by E.C. Segar and writer Ralph Stein.

Eisman remedied this situation in a Sunday strip published Dec. 28, 2008.

CONSIDERING "THE RULE OF EIGHT"

Ben Wink
P.O. Box 2215
Kingsford, MI 49802

In ***CBG*** #1650, Marc Patten wrote a column about the rule of eight when it comes to being a new publisher of comics. Overall, I did like the mini-synopses of the fledgling independent comics publishers of the early to mid-90s. However I did have criticisms, as well.

I will grant you that Defiant, Triumphant, Lightning, Malibu, and others did overshoot by flooding the marketplace with issues. Those companies do, indeed, prove the thesis that overflowing the stands with new product isn't necessarily a good path to longevity. However, there was only passing mention of the biggest '90s publishing phenomenon that flooded the market — and is still afloat today: Image.

In a short span, *Spawn, Youngblood, WildC.A.T.S, Maxx, Pitt, Cyberforce, Shadowhawk,* and *Savage Dragon* all came on the shelves. Brand new characters that had brand new continuities came on the market. Granted, that initial flood of titles was under eight, but later came such titles as *Deathblow, Gen13,* and all of the *Youngblood* tie-ins, as well. Those titles didn't last forever, but Image is still around, despite starting out with a plethora of new titles. I know that Image wouldn't get brought up because it doesn't serve the theory of the article, due to its being a successful entity in the comics-publishing world. However, seeing the success of the upstart known as Image, it would have been worth mentioning.

I also would like to take issue with this statement: "The Ultimate line is perhaps the most perfect attempt at a new super-hero line in the history of comics." I would like to politely disagree with this statement and the rest of the section that praises the Ultimate line. All the other publishers that were dissected, with the exception of Valiant, started out with new, previously unpublished characters, had to come up with new continuities, and had to find outside financial backing for the most part.

Joe Quesada and Bill Jemas' "right idea" was to take *already established* popular Marvel characters with more than 40 years of history and stick them in a slightly different universe. Quesada and Jemas never had to come up with the *idea* of Spider-Man; Stan Lee and Steve Ditko did the heavy lifting there. They never had to come up with a group called The Fantastic Four or The X-Men, because Stan Lee and Jack Kirby already had. What total risk was there? Moreover, they had the financial backing of one of The Big Two with them the whole way.

Readers weren't intrigued by new characters; they were intrigued by the old, familiar characters in different situations and continuity that was askew to the one they grew up reading. Even Valiant started out with Magnus and Solar: characters that Patten correctly mentioned already had a publishing history. DC's Impact line had super-heroes from the Archie line that hadn't been around for years, but they had been previously published. Between the Valiant, Impact, and Ultimate lines, the Ultimate line had the least amount of risk, hands down.

What it all comes back down to is this: The Ultimate line should not be reaping any praise as a risky venture. If anything, that last section of the article should have been reserved for the creators of Image publishing. This line has been around for a long time, truly *did* take the risks, and introduced a new continuity with new characters, without Marvel or DC backing them along the way.

AN ORDERING "MILESTONE"

Christopher Allen
P.O. Box 540352
Dallas, TX 75354

I have preordered my comics from Westfield for almost 20 years, although I've been reading comics more than twice that long. As a result, I have regular records of my comics-buying habits. The trend has been noticeable for some time — but hit home like a runaway diesel when I totaled my March 2009 shipping form and realized I had ordered no Marvel comics, only a single DC comic (and that only because of the George Pérez art), and fewer comic books total — six — than such specialty items as books, magazines, and a Rocketeer bust — eight.

A decade ago, I was ordering a half-dozen Marvel titles (give or take a couple either way, depending on

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FOR ART'S SAKE

by Chris Smigliano

AT THE BUTLER'S CLUB LOUNGE
-IT GETS SO TIRING CONSTANTLY HAVING TO THROW OUT THAT ANDREWS BOY!!
OH? TRY HANDLING THE AFFAIRS OF A OBSESSED DEPRESSIVE PSYCOPATH!!
HA! YOU THINK THAT'S BAD.. TRY CLEANING UP AFTER A AVENGERS MEETING! TOTAL SLOBS, ALL OF THEM!!
HEY, LOOK! ISN'T THAT OLD SNOBBLY TALKING WITH CADBURY?
YES. I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE STILL ALLOWED TO EVEN BE IN THIS CLUB. AFTER ALL, THEY HAVEN'T BEEN PUBLISHED FOR YEARS!!
WELL, THE CLUB DIRECTOR SEEMS TO HAVE A SOFT SPOT FOR RIFF-RAFF LIKE THAT...
HMMPH...SAD. YOU'D EXPECT HIGHER STANDARDS FROM THOSE NEW YORKER TYPES!!
:GROAN: WHAT IS IT WITH THESE BUTLERS AND THEIR SIMILAR HAIRSTYLES??
©2009

special issues and creator changes) each month, twice that in black-and-whites and independents and three to four times that in DCs.

What happened?

"Events" and the concomitant inability to read almost any mainstream hero title without having to read the "event of the year" overblown, underperforming mini-series, and — often — a half-dozen at best peripherally related other titles.

"Abuse" of major heroes whose creators (or editorial staff) appear to no longer know how to tell a dramatic story with those heroes as catalysts. Instead they've resorted to destroying those heroes and/or everything around them for cheap, short-term dramatic effect — with the long-term consequence that I no longer believe in the savaged universe those heroes inhabit.

And, perhaps most significantly, "anecdotalism": Issues became *so* deconstructed that nothing of consequence happened in many of them (save for pithy exchanges of momentous-sounding dialogue). The ability to begin, develop, and resolve even a *minor* secondary plotline in a single issue — never mind a complete and satisfying full story — is so rare in mainstream hero comics as to be mocked, when it is attempted, by some of the medium's big current names. The emperor has no clothes.

Spider-Man's continuity has been savaged. Batman had become such an object for DC editorial abuse as to almost justify the angry, pinch-faced misanthrope he's become. I can't read either — the books I grew up with, the books I matured with — any more.

I am clearly, at my age, not the reader the medium is going to miss. But I have two sons who represent the next potential generation, avid readers both, who follow no titles regularly; and the numbers on each month's "hot comics" these days look laughable compared to sales numbers for best-selling titles in the days when I was a target reader. The medium looks more and more to me as if it is simply surviving by cannibalizing itself.

Maybe some of the reasons I bought essentially no comics this month are why.

NO COKE, WATER

Dana Gabbard
3010 Wilshire Blvd., #362
Los Angeles, CA 90010

William Insignares will be thrilled to hear that having Superman quaff soda (***CBG*** #1650) could also lead to controversy. Out here in California, we have what is known as the First Five Commission, which has been running ads warning of the dangers obesity as a result of youngsters' poor eating habits. Excess consumption of sodas is one of the culprits targeted. Yikes! DC better change those beverage bottles to glasses of water.

By the way, I have always wondered how Superman's biology functions. He draws energy from the sun for his super-abilities. So does he actually eat because he's hungry or is it just habit? Remember *Action Comics* #454 (Dec 75), in which he consumed a pile of *faux* Big Macs because some story gimmick meant he needed to eat to fuel his super-abilities? Or how about when Wally West as The Flash post-*Crisis* consumed candy bars to provide the energy to do speedy feats? It always bothered me when Superman's powers were depicted as if, the moment he is exposed to a red sun, they vanish. Has he no stored latent energy to draw on? Mark Waid in *Kingdom Come* had Luthor lament that the

It is not possible to publish all letters received, and we cannot reply to letters that we don't print. Letters submitted to ***Oh, So?*** for publication become the property of F+W Media. Letters will be edited and may be cut due to length and other considerations. If any of your message — including your address — is not for publication, please indicate that in your message.

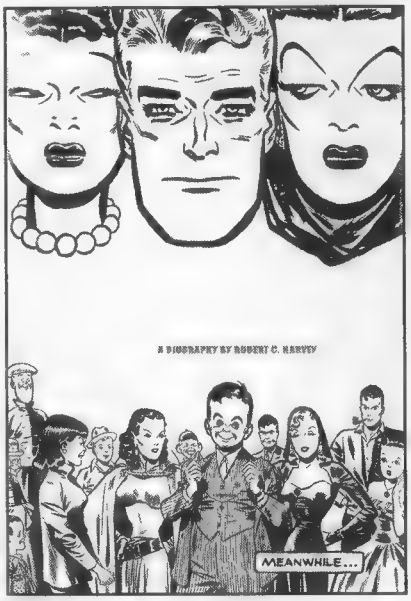
older Superman built up immunity to kryptonite after decades of, as he put it, "guzzling" solar energy. That, at least, has the ring of truth versus his powers being like a light switch that turns off and on in an instant.

I fear David Malcolm Porta's hopes for more details about Dell variants will prove difficult to research. In fact, finding out much of *anything* about Western Printing and Lithographing can be challenging. Sadly, it appears Western's business records vanished during the round robin of owners it's had since the 1980s. Besides the Whitman variants, Porta will need also to track down and document the briefly produced and less prominent Top Comics variants (circa 1967) of various Gold Key comics, evidently produced for purposes of distribution to toy stores and the like.

The gift I am giving myself this year is a copy of Dave Strickler's book *Syndicated Comic Strips and Artists 1924-1995*, compiled from the annual Syndicate Directory that appears in *Editor & Publisher*. I look forward to hours of fun perusing that one! Further details appear at *www.comicsaccess.com*. And I have hopes of soon acquiring the intriguing biographies of two comics legends — Milton Caniff by R.C. Harvey and Joe Kubert by Bill Schelly. They both have received very good buzz.

Maggie: Meanwhile ...: A Biography of Milton Caniff, Creator of Terry and the Pirates and Steve Canyon *lists for $34.95.*

Man of Rock: A Biography of Joe Kubert *lists for $19.99.*



And the Strickler volume is $13.95 plus $2.25 shipping (and $1.01 sales tax for California residents).

Seriously: Check out all three. They are gems.

OF SPIRIT AND ARCHIVES

Jeff Dyer
Dubuque, Iowa

I saw Frank Miller's *The Spirit* and it was OK. But it should have been amazing. Taken on its own merits, the film was ridiculous, campy fun. But, sadly, it just wasn't Will Eisner's *The Spirit*. Miller had the great fortune of having two of his excellent books (*Sin City* and *300*) translated faithfully to the screen by directors who understood his work and captured it beautifully on film. He had the opportunity to show the world what Will Eisner's *Spirit* was all about and pretty much blew it.

As I said, I had fun watching parts of this movie. There were traces (very few) of Eisner's comic strip up there on the big screen. But mostly what I saw up there was Frank Miller. *The Spirit* redefined what comics can be. Week after week for 12 years, Will Eisner shifted from genre to genre, creating classic after classic. Miller had so much to pull from it isn't funny, but the result earned ninth place in its debut week, basically insuring there will not be a sequel and, even worse, giving millions the false impression that *The Spirit* is garbage. Eisner's creation is anything but that.

Again, this film had some redeeming qualities (Gabriel Macht as the title character, for instance — I enjoyed his portrayal a lot). But overall, it's just a sad missed opportunity. I would have loved to see a more faithful adaptation of Eisner's masterpiece on the big screen. I wince when I think about the failed attempts by Pixar and *Incredibles* director Brad Bird to bring *The Spirit* to life years ago. What a film that could have been! Instead we're left with a movie that looks like *Sin City* and doesn't feel much like *The Spirit*. I can't believe Michael Uslan, who brought Batman to the silver screen, produced this. Didn't he know, couldn't he see how far off-course they were? I could write that Miller has "besmirched the name of The Spirit," but he hasn't. This movie will be forgotten, but Eisner's classic will endure. On my bookshelf I have 25 beautiful volumes of *The Spirit Archives*. Any time I want to read a great Spirit story, I'll just pull down one of those books.

On that note, I would like to hear from DC about its plans for the *Archives* line. For years (a couple decades, actually) we could count on virtually an *Archive* published each month. Lately, it has slowed to a crawl. So far, all comments about the future of *Archives* have been vague. We're getting one, possibly two Archives in 2009 (*Flash Archives* Vol. 5 and *Starman Archives* Vol. 2).

As a fan and collector (I have all of them), I'm saddened by this slowdown. I understand the economy is a factor and business is business. But, on the other side, Marvel is producing *Masterworks* at a faster rate than ever before. Moreover, its editors are forthcoming, doing Q and A sessions on the Web and laying out their plans months in advance.

I wish DC would tell us which *Archives* are coming. Sure, it probably can't produce 12 to 14 a year like they used to, but I wish DC could focus on a few lines and advance them. More *Flash Archives* are certainly welcome. I would love to see the Carmine Infantino *Flash* issues collected, as well as the Gil Kane *Green Lantern* issues wrapped up. Two more *Kamandi Archives* would complete the Kirby run. Those are just a few examples of *Archives* that I would love to see. Slowing them down is one thing, but ending them altogether is unacceptable.

I know DC is doing the *DC Classics Library* books, but so far none have seen print and the ones that have been advertised are not all that thrilling. I'm still waiting

OKAY, TEEN-GANG. THE CLUES LEAD US TO THIS LAW FIRM FOX HIRED TO KEEP "WATCHMEN" FROM BEING RELEASED UNDER WARNER BROTHERS.
WE'RE NOT TEENS.
AND WE NEED MORE BLING TO BE A "GANG."
I KNEW SOMEONE WOULD EVENTUALLY FIND ME OUT...
MATT MURDOCK, AKA "DAREDEVIL?" YOU'RE BEHIND ALL OF THIS?
MY COMIC BOOK HEROICS ARE MOSTLY ABOUT WORKING OUT ANGST AND FRUSTRATION; THIS IS NO DIFFERENT.
I SAW A RIPE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY THAT WOULD ONCE AGAIN SHOW HOW LACKLUSTER BEN AFFLECK'S INTERPRETATION OF ME WAS, AND I STRUCK.
HANG ON. THE GUY WHO OWNS FOX...
RUPERT MURDOCH. MATT MURDOCK.
I TOLD MY COUSIN THAT CHANGING ONLY ONE LETTER OF OUR SURNAME WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH. I TOLD HIM AMERICANS WEREN'T COMPLETELY BRAIN-DEAD.
I'M ABOUT TO BE; I CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE OF THIS SCOOBI-DOO STUFF.

for the *Monster Society of Evil* from the 1940s, but that hasn't even been solicited yet (though it was announced in 2007). I hope DC will respond either online or in **CBG** and give us *Archives* fans a few crumbs of information. After all, we're the ones who have supported this (pricey) line of hardcover books for 20 years. DC should be proud of the amazing collections. I think the *DC Archives* are probably the finest comic-book reprints available today. Let's hope this is only a temporary lull in their production.

LOOKING AT LUCAS

Gary Leach

Peter David goes to the mat for faith over science in "What Happened to George Lucas?" (*But I Digress*, **CBG** #1650), and I largely agree with much of what he wrote, especially after seeing *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* aka *Indiana Jones Fights the Future*. Still, Lucas is as entitled as anyone else to have his perspective change after the passing of a couple of decades or so, so I'm not sure I'd call him on the carpet for that.

More than that, it strikes me as fitting that the first (narratively speaking) *Star Wars* trilogy shows the catastrophic results of science trumping the human spirit. The second trilogy (narratively speaking) is all about a reversal of that view, at least on the part of the heroes trying to right the wrongs in that galaxy far, far away. Midichlorians? One has to wonder, with Yoda's reflections in *The Empire Strikes Back*, if that wizened old Jedi spent his exile coming to the conclusion, based on bitter experience the cinema audience has now been allowed to share, that the midichlorians business was a lot of hooey.

As for potting the original *Death Star*, it's worth remembering that the reason the rebellion risked so much to snag those plans was in order to find a weak spot in the blasted thing. The scenario is made absurd, not by the nature of the weakness but by the boneheaded method the rebels come up with to exploit it. Knowing the precise location of the target, those brave rebel pilots couldn't dive straight *at* the thing?

Brent: *Remember, the location was well-defended by cannons on the surface of the* ***Death Star****, requiring the pilots to maneuver down the trench and release their torpedoes at precisely the right moment.*

If you ever played the original arcade videogame, you know that additional obstacles were added to the trench to make it even more difficult to make it through. (Spent a lot of quarters learning that game back in the day.)

THE ARK IN AFRICA

Bill McGee

I enjoyed Peter David's column in **CBG** #1650 titled "What Happened to George Lucas?" The article mentioned extensive references to religious artifacts in his movies. One reference was to The Ark of the Covenant. There is a book titled *Lost Ark of the Covenant* by Tudor Parfitt. This book is in many public libraries. The author's investigations led him to make a claim that a remnant of a copy of the original ark is in a Zimbabwe museum. Parfitt theorizes that, centuries ago, the Lemba tribe of Zimbabwe, South Africa, transported the original ark to this country. The book mentions genetic studies from others that show that this tribe carries a Jewish genetic marker. This genetic marker was a subject of a PBS series several years ago. The author cannot prove conclusively his claim about the ark, but the book is very interesting.

SMALL CON ADVANTAGES

Steve Ogden
10010 Brill Way
Hagerstown, MD 21742

The best comics conventions that I have ever been to were the small local conventions of the late 1970s and early 1980s: nice little cons that were either at the Howard Johnson's or the Best Western in Wheaton, Md. Later, those cons moved to the Silver Spring Armory; they were good, too. But, the best ones for my friends and me were the ones at Howard Johnson's and Best Western.

Back then, we would have some big-name folks appear as a guests. I remember meeting Neal Adams for the first time there; he was really nice. I asked him to sign my copy of *Monsters Unleashed* #3, for which he'd drawn the cover. Before he signed it, he flipped through it and wanted to show the Man-Thing story by the late great Grey Morrow to the people standing around. Adams was saying how great Grey was and this was how comics should be drawn. My pals and I were also able to meet Frank Miller, Terry Austin, Paul Smith, Bill Sienkiewicz, Barry Smith, Jim Fern, Gene Colan, and Bob Layton.

Layton drew a wonderful drawing of Iron Man for me. It was the pose from the cover of *Iron Man* #126. It is framed and on my wall, as I write this. My friend Steve got another great drawing of Iron Man, and I

Juan Manuel Perez
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La Pryor, TX 78872

I am a **CBG** subscriber and a Forrest J Ackerman and Vampirella fan. Just showing a little love. I am sure others will appreciate it, as well.

In Horror-oriam
Forrest J Ackerman
1916-2008

Like a fantastical horror comic-book dream,
I found myself in a black-and-white panelistic scene
In a gothic house full of creepy guests
All dressed up in their blackest best.

Dear Uncle Creepy was definitely there;
Even Cousin Eerie gave me a stare.
For that I didn't give a screaming care:
I was looking for Vampirella who wasn't anywhere.

Other Famous Monsters soon arrived.
We held each other and we cried.
Even though we found ourselves asking why,
We knew that all good things must die.

Our man Forry has finally gone:
Mister Science Fiction, Mister Pun.
We are left contemplating all his work,
Karloffornia dreaming all the way to New York.

Saying my final, final good bye,
I found myself finally walking outside.
There, by a corner near the creaking door,
I found Vampirella crying and sobbing and more.

Hugging and expressing condolences to her,
"Forry is in a better place," I reassured.
"Vampirella, I promise it will be OK
We all have a better place to go someday."

I kissed her gently, as she kissed me back,
Knowing full well that I'm just her snack.
Pushing me away, as I realized
Ackermansion disappearing in front of my eyes.

The last thing I saw was a great figure of a man.
It was Forry himself, I began to understand.
Waving and smiling like only he can.
Bidding farewell to his monstrous fans.

have that drawing, as well, now. (I traded a whole Tarzan paperback series for it.) My friend John also got a neat drawing of Iron Man flying, which he has to this day and will not part with. My friend Nick got a Captain Marvel drawing.

At another show, John got a nice drawing of Nightcrawler from Paul Smith. We were all eying the drawing after the show and noticed that Nightcrawler was missing his tail. We had a laugh over that, and John still has that drawing.

These shows were so much fun to attend. We felt that these were *our* conventions, made for *us*. I will never forget going to those shows: the smell of comic-book paper in the air and being with my friends and being able talk to real comic-book professionals. These guys really talked to us, and it meant a lot. The comics dealers were just fans, too, and were selling any comic that you could think of. My first Golden Age comic passed through my hands at one of these shows, as well as my first Silver Age comic.

I miss those days and I know that feeling will never come again. Fandom is just not the same any more.

There still is a nice show in Tyson's Corners, Va., every other month that is pretty good for us. Frank Cho and Jo Chen were at the last one. Jo Chen is really a nice lady and drew a wonderful drawing of Peter Cannon Thunderbolt for me. She is a talented illustrator.

I do not like the big conventions. I will never go to San Diego. It has morphed into something that I do not think I would like and it doesn't appear to be pleasant to go to. If you do not have a lot of money or are not an "insider," it is a disappointment.

The Baltimore Comic Con is considered a big show, but, as of now, the main focus is still comics. I like going only to see and talk with Mark McKenna, Jim Calafiore, Steve Conley, and John Gallagher.

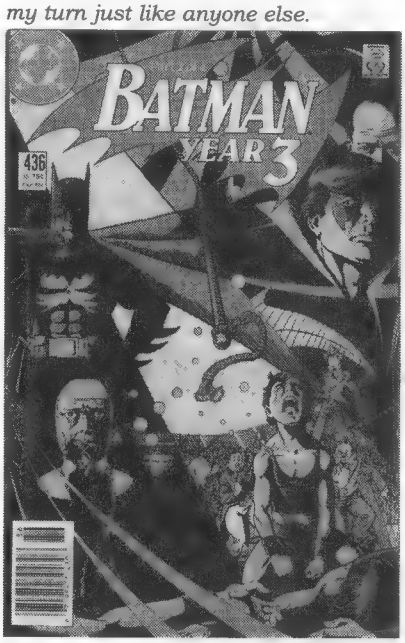
Brent: *It's been said before, but your experiences at Comic-Con International: San Diego are what* ***you*** *make of them. If you're a movie or TV fan, you can spend the entire show at panels featuring previews of upcoming films and shows or appearances by stars and creators of current shows. If you're a diehard comics fans, there are plenty of dealers with such a wide variety of comics available that you*

can spend the entire show just looking through their wares and filling in holes in your collection.

If you prefer to obtain sketches from artists, this is probably one of the best opportunities to do so, considering the hundreds of artists attending. Many longtime friendships have been made by fans who took the time to interact with their favorite creator during a lull. For myself, there's the thrill of seeing what's new and upcoming from various companies, the discovery of a rare item for my collection (I actually spent more on prose novels than comics at last year's show), and the chance to speak face-to-face with fans and creators.

Sure, there are some extra opportunities afforded by my job (last year, I spent several hours offsite at Sony Online Entertainment's San Diego software offices for a story), but, for the most part, I indulge my fannish passions just like any other attendee.

With Mark McKenna, Mark Texeira, and Mark Sparacio set up in the booth next to ours, we get additional ***opportunities*** *for interaction with those talented gentlemen, but I have to wait my turn just like anyone else.*



WHAT I LIKE ABOUT ROBIN

Nathan Biornstad

In ***CBG*** #1650 (Feb 09), Beau Smith asked readers to tell why we like our favorite characters.

Without a doubt, my favorite character is Tim Drake as Robin. I appreciate his strong sense of ethics and his cleverness. He was created in the early 1990s, when other super-heroes had anger issues and

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flat personalities. Tim was different. He was clever and discovered Batman's identity. He was humble and was comfortable with who he was. He also had a goal: to become the next Robin. All of these things I find inspiring.

I know that today it may be unpopular and unwelcome, but I believe that our heroes should inspire us to be better people. Yes, the stories we read should be entertaining, but they should also call us forth to be the person that we can become. For me, Tim Drake as Robin reminds us that we can achieve our goals, we can strive to make the world a better place, we can do our part to fight crime and corruption. I like Robin because he reminds me of both the person that I am and the person that I am becoming.

MORE SPIRIT THOUGHTS

Nelson Jimenez

Norwalk, Conn.

I just saw *The Spirit* on the big screen and, boy, was it disappointing. I was expecting a better film, especially with all those involved, including Frank Miller, Samuel L. Jackson, Eva Mendes, and Scarlett Johansson. It is an unusual-looking film with rich colors, good action sequences, and beautiful women — and Gabriel Macht as the title character wasn't bad, either. I agreed with the color change of The Spirit from blue to black, but not with the origin making him a super-human character. I did like the casting of Jackson as The Octopus, because he was never shown in the comics (only his gloves, which were matched in the movie, as well).

But why did it have to be so corny with over-the-top dialogue, identical idiotic goon henchmen, and no mention of Ebony?

The only other thing I liked were the homages to Jules Feiffer, Harvey Kurtzman, E.C. comics, and Steve Ditko. I also found it curious that DC was never mentioned — was it not part of their comic movies like *Dark Knight* or *Watchmen*? They didn't even advertise it in the comics or comics-related periodicals.

Speaking of beautiful women, we lost two exotic beauties in 2008: actress and singer Eartha Kitt and gorgeous model Bettie Page. They became part of comics lore in different ways: Kitt as the first black Catwoman on the campy Adam West *Batman* series and Page as herself

NOR WILL ANYONE EVER SEE HIM... YOU'LL TAKE HIS ORDERS AND THAT'S ALL... GENTLEMEN... THE OCTOPUS!!
GENTLEMEN, I CAN PROMISE YOU A VERY PROFITABLE FUTURE, SO WHY WORRY ABOUT WHAT I LOOK LIKE?

CLAW-LIKE FINGERS CLOSE ABOUT DENNY'S FACE...OFF BALANCE, HE IS HURLED AGAINST THE WALL..HE FIRES BLINDLY.
...SMASHING THE VAT OF LIQUID...
WITH A DEAFENING HISS, THE LIQUID GUSHES OUT IN AN EXPLODING STREAM / DENNY IS CAUGHT IN IT... INSTINCTIVELY, HE THROWS HIS HAND OVER HIS FACE...
2

in Dave Stevens' beautifully drawn *Rocketeer* series. Rest in peace, lovely ladies — Heaven just got a whole lot prettier!

I also wanted to send out special kudos to Peter David on his latest columns regarding George Takei and George Lucas: interesting and informative. I cut them out and shared them with a few friends. He uses my favorite line from *Star Wars:* "I find your lack of faith disturbing." It ranks up there with Stan Lee's "With great power comes great responsibility."

Maggie: *The origin story in the very first* ***Spirit*** *supplement made it clear he was a durable super-hero, and fantasy elements appeared throughout the run of the feature.*

WHITHER ROZANSKI?

Steve Kortus
2208 74th Ave. N.
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I noticed my favorite column, *Tales from the Database*, was absent from ***CBG*** #1650.

First, a little history: I originally heard the rumors of a mega comics find in the mid- to late-'70s. For us in the Midwest, the rumors of an amazing, high-grade Golden Age collection were just that until *The Buyer's Guide for Comic Fandom* began running ads for deep runs of Golden Age comics. I was impressed but also incensed to discover that they were priced significantly above Overstreet. This was still the time of peace, dope, and brotherly love. (Or brother, share the wealth, as the case may be.)

It was clear that this dealer from Colorado was trying to rip us off! (At that time, there was still a general belief that there were many more virgin collections of equal, if not greater, depth soon to be found. Soon, we believed, we would get the last laugh! Thirty years has proven that theory wrong.)

Chuck Rozanski received a great deal of heat back then, but he stuck to his principles and I admire him for that. Today, I admire his insight into the comics market, command of economic principles, and superior writing skills. In other words, I really look forward to his thoughts and opinions and I am disappointed when he is unable to meet his deadline. I am aware that Chuck has ongoing medical concerns and hope that is not the reason he missed #1650.

Brent: *Chuck continues to battle the effects of West Nile Virus but hasn't reported any major bouts in a while. For the past several months, he's shifted to a bimonthly writing schedule, something he and I discussed at last summer's Wizard World Chicago.*

FROM SUPERMAN TO STAR TREK

Richard M. Brown
2326 Cabot
Detroit, MI 48209

I wonder if anyone else went as crazy as I did, when they saw the cover of *World's Finest* #14 on Page 68 of ***CBG*** #1650?

Superman's cape has a blue "S" on it, rather than the usual yellow version. This stuck out like a sore thumb to me. The blue "S" with a yellow background almost looks green.

I'm also wondering about an encyclopedia claiming Clark Kent's middle name is Joseph. A middle name? Since when?

Moving on to *Star Trek*: Spock clearly has enhanced hearing. In the original TV series episode "The Cloud Minders," an attractive admirer commented on his gift. Spock overheard McCoy's compliment of him.

If that's so, why did fellow Vulcan Tuvok say he *didn't* have special hearing to a boy on an episode of *Star Trek: Voyager*?

As viewers were reminded in various episodes, Spock was clearly "not human." Tuvok, however, also seems more like a man trained to control his emotions. Many Vulcans seem to make their lack of emotions a lack of feeling.

Where do the biological and self-control aspects of this begin?

Brent: *Thanks for pointing out that coloring gaffe, Richard. I found the art and laid out those pages and never even noticed the miscolored "S." Sometimes you can just work too closely to a given item.*

Moving on to your ***Star Trek*** *questions, I'd surmise that Tuvok's age could have had something to do with his lack of enhanced hearing. Tuvok served on the* ***Excelsior*** *under Captain Sulu in* ***Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country****, and there's the better part of a century between the events of that film and those of* ***Voyager****. It's also possible that some injury or illness robbed Tuvok of his ability. Spock, on the other hand, was still a relatively young Vulcan during the original five-year mission.*

As for the self-control and biological aspects of emotional control, again, there's a considerable difference between Tuvok and Spock.

Spock is half-human on his mother's side, so has not only Vulcan biology but also human biology and the related emotions, generated by a mix of two races' hormones, to control. While he does so most of the time, there are times when that control slips. In "The Cage," for example, Spock lets emotion come through more than once during his report to Captain Pike and, again, on the Talosian surface where a rare smile crosses his face. In "Amok Time," the ravages of ***pon farr*** *cause him to become violently angry and, later, to break down sobbing in a conference room.*

I'm not as familiar with Tuvok's emotional control, as I was never a big fan of ***Voyager****, but I'd speculate that his life experiences, especially his completion of the Vulcan ceremony of* ***kolinahr****, designed to help a Vulcan more completely control his emotions (a ceremony that Spock didn't complete in* ***Star Trek: The Motion Picture****), could have shaped his abilities.*

Of course, outside of the fictional realm of the various ***Star Trek*** *series and movies, it could all come down to the performances of Leonard Nimoy and Tim Russ.*

Maggie: *Yeah, ol' Clark Joe Kent. Or, as some no doubt called him, "C.J." I have no idea where that middle name was introduced, but the information is published on Page 340 of the 2008 edition of DK Publishing's* ***The DC Comics Encyclopedia****.*

SILVER AGE SUGGESTIONS

Editor's note: *The following exchange was part of a much longer thread on* ***CBGXtra.com.***

Craig Shutt

The other day, a fan asked me for some "Silver Age-like" comics available now. Obviously, that depends on how you define it, but I thought, hmm, I'd recommend DC's animated line, but most of those titles have been discontinued (and *Super Friends* is too creepy looking and *Supergirl: Adventures in the Eighth Grade* is too targeted to its audience). I've always liked *Amazing Spider-Girl*, but it's being canceled, too, not that that will last long, since it never does. The Mark Waid and George Pérez *Brave and the Bold* was enjoyable and possibly would count, but I don't know if it's maintained that.

I recommended *The Spirit* and *Love and Capes*, but it was disappointing to think that a bunch of the recent options are gone. Is that coincidence? Hopefully, there'll be some others (maybe more *Sentry* mini-series), or I'll only be able to recommend the trade-paperback collections.

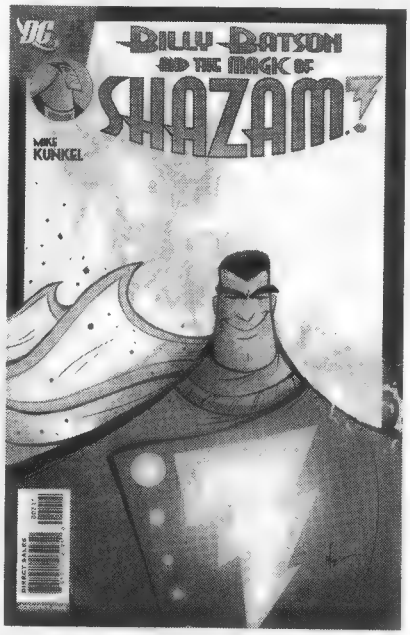
Does anybody else have any suggestions of current comics that evoke the Silver Age?

Dave Blanchard

Without putting too fine a point on it, isn't this kind of like asking somebody to give you change for a 20 in Confederate dollars? That Silver Age ship left port a long time ago.

There are plenty of Silver Age-like comics available now — they're called *Essentials* and *Showcase Presents* and back issues. Are there any comic books with all-new material that are Silver Age-like? In my view, the short answer is no. Even the funny-animal comics of 2009 and the Archie comics of 2009 are sufficiently different from those of more than 40 years ago that I wouldn't say they're the same animal.

Superman still has a blue suit and a red cape and a spit curl, so he at least *looks* the same as he did in 1966. Spidey still looks the same. Ben Grimm still looks the same. But looks, as we all know, can be deceiving.



Brent Frankenhoff

Despite its erratic schedule, I'd say *Billy Batson and the Magic of Shazam!* has some of the Silver Age flavor that readers are looking for.

Beyond that, check out *The Twelve* from Marvel. It's a little dark for the Silver Age, but does have some of that revival feel to it, as Golden Age characters cope with modern-day sensibilities.

It'll probably get me lambasted here, but *Amazing Spider-Man* over the last year has had quite a bit of the same type of storytelling that thrilled me in the late '60s and early '70s.

Justice Society of America and almost anything else written by Geoff Johns shows what a Silver Age title could have been without the restrictions of the Comics Code Authority.

And how did we all overlook *Kurt Busiek's Astro City*?

Andy (aka DT64)

I think there are two reasons for that oversight:

1. While *Astro City* is certainly an interesting comment on the Silver Age, it's much more self-aware than any real Silver Age title could (or would) ever be.

2. I don't know about you, but I can't even remember when the last issue appeared.

Craig Shutt

There are two ways of looking at the idea of recommending "Silver Age-like" comics: 1.) Which comics embody the ambiance of Silver Age comics? and 2.) If someone enjoys the *Essentials* and *Showcase Presents* books, what current periodicals or trade paperbacks would you recommend to them? Maybe I'm overanalyzing, but it seems to me that those can be different things.

The first is tough, because Stan Lee, Julie Schwartz, Mort Weisinger, and Murray Boltinoff had really different ideas of how to plot a comic, and the Silver Age embodied them all. I kind of know what a comic with a "Silver Age feel" to it is when I see it, but it's hard to put into words, and I don't know that everyone would agree with my perspective.

As to the second, I considered both *Shazam* and *Justice Society*, as

I read both, but I don't think they really have much of a Silver Age feel to them. *Shazam* is a bit avant-garde even for a kid-targeted book to invoke a Silver Age feel, and *Justice Society*'s trade paperback-style pacing and more mature approach doesn't remind me of that, either.

(Frankly, I have to say, another reason I didn't recommend *Justice Society* is that I'm really tired of them wallowing for so many issues in *Kingdom Come* leftovers, which finally have ended, and I've never been a big fan of Black Adam, which is coming next, which means we're in the midst of about a years' worth of stories that I haven't enjoyed all that much. The *Kingdom Come* stuff got so boring, that (given that Black Adam is coming next) I may not be reading it much longer unless the Black Adam story is more interesting than I expect. I know it will be a trade-paperback-length "arc" and I'm already overly invested — especially after all those *Kingdom Come* "Specials" — in a comic book that I don't enjoy as much as I used to.)

I understand from the few reviews I've seen that the *Marvel Adventures* line has that feel to it, but I haven't read any, so I'm not sure. I'd agree that *Amazing Spider-Man* is probably the closest in Marvel's main line. That would be a good one, if someone wants something that's in-continuity.

I think "dark" is the antithesis of what a Silver Age comic would invoke, so I'm not sure I agree that *The Twelve* would be a good one to suggest. Likewise, Alex Ross' *Superpowers* is interesting, but only because he's using defunct characters who used to exist; there's no real Silver Age vibe to it — and I'm sure he doesn't want one, because most people would be turned off by that.

The best super-hero title out there for me is *Invincible*, but I'm not sure that it's got a Silver Age feel to it. It's got clean, straightforward art and a definite heroic hero with a secret identity but it's pretty bloody by design and is much deeper, if you read it from the beginning rather than just picking up midstream.

Frankly, I find that the comics I like that have that feel to them don't last long, because most fans don't want that. They want more "sophistication." I had high hopes for *Madman's Atomic Comics*, but, yeesh, it became a mess really quickly. (I see now where Mike Allred's going back to Done in One stories, so maybe he figured out the problem.)

Sadly, I agree with Andy on *Astro City*. I would recommend it because it's a cross between having a Silver Age feel and commenting on that time (as well as having art that looks a lot like Gene Colan), but it doesn't really exist as an ongoing comic.

I always laugh at the reading lists of people who tout independents: "I'm reading *Astro City, Amelia Rules, Dork Tower, Patty Cake*, and *Supernatural Law*!" Gee, that must take you about an hour a year ...

MOPEE ALERT!

Jack Abramowitz
via CBGXtra.com

Mopee makes an appearance in *Super Friends* #11, which shipped January 14.

I don't even want to think about what this does for continuity!

Craig Shutt

Thanks for the alert, Jack, I'll have to check out this appearance. I think I have all his others, and I'd hate to miss one, even there.

Frankly, I don't much like thinking about what the *Super Friends* do for continuity, period. They are pretty creepy looking critters. It's a shame DC canceled *Justice League Unlimited* for that book.

Andy (aka DT64)

All his others? Egad, man — you mean he *didn't* just go away, never to be mentioned again (except for here — repeatedly) after that one universe-shattering appearance? Isn't that what the whole concept of Mopeedom means?

Craig Shutt

His other appearances were in the *Ambush Bug* mini-series in the 1980s, which may take place in the DC universe but certainly not on any Earth that anyone would ever refer to again. So I think we're safe in that regard. They weren't that significant but they gave me a few more images to use to dress up my annual column.

The Adventures of Bumpkin Buzz
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CROSSING OVER!
EPISODE 12.08
EGADS! WHO ARE YOU?
GREETINGS! I AM BIG CROSSOVER!
GIVEN THIS EPISODE'S TITLE, I WAS EXPECTING THAT SLEEPY-EYED GUY FROM TV WHO TALKS TO DEAD PEOPLE.
SO WHAT ARE YOU ALL ABOUT, CROSS-OVER?
AH! WELL, UH, SOMETHING, CATACLYSMIC, EARTH-SHATTERING, SOMETHING, ET CETERA, SOMETHING!
YOU'RE NOT VERY WELL THOUGHT OUT, ARE YOU, MR. CROSSOVER?
TRUE! BUT BEHOLD--!
RESOLVED OR NOT, MY STORY ENDS! HERE I GO--I'M ENDING!
JIMENEY! WHAT THE-?!
TA-DAA! NOW I AM THE BIG CROSSOVER!
HOLD ON, CROSSY! YOU DIDN'T END-- YOU JUST OOZED INTO THE NEXT ONE!
BUT!! I AM THE FINAL CRITICAL CROSSOVER!
WE SHOULD BE SO LUCKY.
IT'S AN INVASION!
IT'S A SECRET!
PLOT TWISTS! & PLOT HOLES!
NOTHING WILL EVER BE THE SAME!
EXCEPT FOR THESE ENDLESS CROSS-OVERS!
LOOK, IS THIS GOING TO TAKE MUCH LONGER? I MEAN, YOU STARTED AS A SUMMER EVENT AND I JUST TOOK THE TREE DOWN.
HEY, IT'S THAT TV PSYCHIC!
I'M SENSING-- NO END TO THIS NONSENSE.
WELL, MAYBE AFTER I CROAK YOU CAN HAVE MY GRANDKIDS TELL ME IF IT EVER STOPPED.
OOH!! HERE COMES ANOTHER ONE!

Funny stuff

The spirit of reviews

by **PETER DAVID**

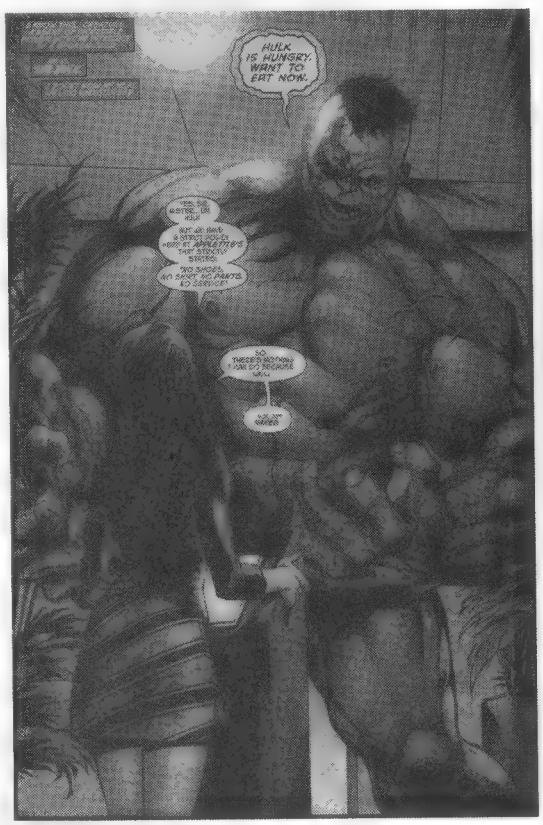
Tragedy is easy. Comedy is hard.

— Old saying

God is a comedian playing to an audience too afraid to laugh.

— Voltaire

So I was the first guest of the year on a fan-run program called *The Comic Book Club*, which consists of three gentlemen — Justin Tyler, Pete LePage, and Alex Zalben — talking about comics in front of a live audience in New York City. As part of the show, they have a segment called "The Stack," which — despite what I'm sure you thought — has nothing to do with the four-level stack interchange in downtown Phoenix that enables travelers to move from I-17 and Route 60 to I-10. Instead, they go through a stack of that week's comic books and discuss them, like *The View* but with less estrogen.



I wasn't planning to participate in "The Stack" section. I've had too many instances in my career where I make a casual comment and it becomes magnified far beyond anything I'd originally intended. "I was underwhelmed by that issue of *Batman*" becomes a 15-page "Peter David slams Denny O'Neil" thread on a comics site. Who needs the grief? So I simply sat there, as Justin, Pete, and Alex went through that week's offerings.

And one of the things they shredded was *The Ultimate Hulk Annual*. They hated it, despised it. Declared it to be the worst book of 2009, and, with the year literally less than a week old, it might have seemed a tad premature to make that declaration. They particularly loathed a sequence in which a stark naked Hulk strides into a diner and demands pancakes of the hostess. They complained that diners don't have hostesses (yeah, many do, actually), and anyway the whole sequence was stupid and merely one example of an overall stupid comic.

Curious to see just how ghastly the comic was (since I hadn't seen it), I picked it up and quickly read it while they talked about other books. And about halfway through, I smiled. And then I started chuckling. By the end, I was audibly laughing, and they asked me what was up.

"This book is funny!" I said. And it was. It was absurd. If satire for theater is what closes out of town, theater of the absurd is what dies in workshop. And comic-book absurdity in a world where many serious-minded comics fans scrutinize every page, every panel, every line? Forget it.

Yet I thought the book was entertaining. With such lines as, "Hulk will get food or Hulk will eat *you*," how could it not be? I considered the sequence that they particularly detested to be gloriously ridiculous — and, thus, hilarious. In the real world, if a 10-foot naked monster confronts a hostess and demands pancakes, she does one of two things: She either runs screaming or she stammers and says, "Whatever you want. Just don't hurt me." She doesn't do what Jeph Loeb had her doing: refuse to seat The Hulk because of the diner's strict dress code. If Sergio Aragonés or Kyle Baker had drawn it, the readers would have been laughing. Instead, the art was absolutely gorgeous but also very realistic, so they thought it was supposed to be taken seriously. (Honestly, the only thing that annoyed me about the comic was that it was called an

annual. I think you need to have an ongoing title for there to be an annual of it, but that could well just be me.) Just one of the many challenges unique to comics: If the mood that the writer is going for doesn't match up with the mood that the artist is going to convey, then the story and art work against each other.

And the guys contended that, even taking all that into account, they didn't like it because they felt it wasn't funny.

Well, you can't argue that. You can't argue what's funny and what's not funny because it's too subjective. There's no right or wrong to the argument.

That discussion, however, prompted me to start thinking about the much-reviled film *The Spirit*. Many contended that it was desperately unfunny and, thus, not remotely faithful to the original Will Eisner series — and that Frank Miller had disrespected Will Eisner, The Spirit, and the concept of reverence to source material, had disgraced his family name going back five generations, was sited on the Grassy Knoll, and probably was the guy who stood in front of the levees in New Orleans the day before Katrina hit and said, "Yeah, these'll hold up."

I'm not interested in discussing whether *The Spirit* was a good film, because that's not what this particular mental exercise is about. I'm interested in discussing whether it's a funny film. Amazingly, that depends on whom you're talking to.

When I went to see it, I was accompanied by my sister-in-law, Sheila, who howled with hysterical laughter repeatedly and loved it, because she perceived it as a surrealist comedy. Other reviewers have cited the film being greeted with laughter, although it was described as being derisive.

I haven't spoken to Frank about what his thinking was but I feel safe in saying that he was going for humor. You don't put Samuel Jackson in a Nazi outfit or a cloned head on a cloned foot or write lines like, "Come on! Toilets are always funny!" and *not* be going for humor.

Here's the thing: Not even the most avid Spirit fans can claim that Will Eisner *wasn't* going for humor in the original strip. There were puns. There was snarky and frankly cornball dialogue. And there was Ebony White, the Spirit's much-debated, much-derided sidekick.

There have been all sorts of discussions over Ebony and whether his inclusion in the series was racist, insensitive, *etc.* Personally, I think it's all beside the point. Ebony was included in the series for a very simple reason: Will Eisner thought he was funny. And, to a 1940s audience, he probably was. To a 2008 audience, it was obviously decided he would not be funny and therefore he wasn't included in the film. Personally, I think that was a mistake. Gary Coleman was born to play Ebony White. C'mon: "Whatchoo talkin' 'bout, Spirit?" How could that not have been a winner? (Then, again, I don't think there was anything in the film that wouldn't have been 110% better if Bruce Campbell had been playing the title character. Sure, he's a little long in the tooth for it, but the chin would have more than made up for it. Go Photoshop it, if you don't believe me.)

Anyway ...

Eisner's humor was what Eisner thought was funny. So Frank Miller, if he was going to remain faithful to Eisner's Spirit, was also going to have to put in humor. The problem is that Eisner left no easy roadmap. It's not as if there were a Spirit graphic novel that Miller could adapt. The stories were only a few pages long, and some of the humor wasn't going to appeal to 21st century sensibilities.

So Miller wrote what *he* thought was funny. Doesn't mean he wasn't being true to the spirit of *The Spirit*. He was, instead, substituting his sense of humor for Eisner's. As far as the fans were concerned, that was a bad fit. Nor did Miller help himself using the *Sin City* visual technique on humor that needed a far lighter touch. The difference between *Sin City* and *The Spirit* is the difference between tragedy and comedy. Saying the former is easy and the latter is hard is a truism, sure, but it barely scratches the surface.

The reason tragedy is easy is because everyone can pretty much agree on what it is. Imagine: You give an audience a scene depicting a mother wheeling her infant through a park in a stroller. Cut to a little boy finding his dad's gun in their apartment. He fiddles with it. The gun goes off. Shot goes out the window. The alarmed father comes running in, grabs the gun away and says, "You could have killed yourself!" Cut to the park and the hysterical mother clutching the blood-covered body of her dead infant.

Most people will see that as tragic.

People dying of cancer. Children losing their parents or vice versa. Hopes and dreams being crushed. A pair of star-crossed lovers taking their lives, whose misadventures piteously overthrow their parents' strife. These are all things that are tragic. As a matter of fact, if

***Borat* hinged on people being made to look like complete nitwits when all they were doing was trying to be hospitable to a foreigner.**

you *don't* see them as tragic, then typically people will figure there's something wrong with you. But, since comedy is so subjective, there's no onus on people to find something funny. If you don't laugh at a comedy, well, it's not your thing. But if you *do* laugh at a *tragedy* — particularly real-life tragedy — then, best-case scenario, you're an insensitive clod. (Or a professional comedian who likes living on the edge.) Worst-case scenario, you're a sociopath. Indeed, when the Twin Towers fell, a lot of comedians were worried they were in trouble. How do you laugh in the face of that? Hannibal Lecter liked to collect newspaper articles about churches collapsing during services. He thought that was funny. He would have seen the comedic possibilities in Sept. 11, whatever those might be. The Joker would have found it side-splitting.

Spoiler Warning.

You never know what people are going to consider funny and you never know what's going to tick them off. For instance: *Young Frankensten.* For the most part, a comedy classic. But at one point The Monster hauls his creator's uptight, virginal fiancée Elizabeth into the forest, lays her down, and proceeds to unzip his fly. Appalled at what's coming and protesting, Elizabeth's eyes widen upon seeing his "schwanzstucker." Her exact reaction: "Woof!" Then she continues to offer token protests through the initial moments of penetration before belting out, "Sweet mystery of life, at last I've found you!"

Basically, he rapes her, but it's OK because he's monstrously equipped.

I'm sorry. I hated that.

I don't think saying that, if a guy is sufficiently equipped, a woman he's forcing himself upon is really going to enjoy it no matter how much she may initially protest, is a good message. Or remotely sensitive. Or funny.

End Spoiler Warning.

Then there's *Borat.* I didn't like that film at all. This puts me on the opposite side of just about everybody, including many of the finest comedic minds of their generations who declared it one of the funniest movies ever. I disagree, because the film hinged on people being made to look like complete nitwits when all they were doing was trying to be hospitable to a foreigner. Some people compared it to *Candid Camera,* but it's not the same at all. With *Candid Camera,* the point wasn't to humiliate people; it was to see their reactions when they were told, "Smile, you're on Candid Camera!" They got to laugh along with us at their credulousness and they appeared on television only because they signed off on it. Borat's victims believed they were appearing in a foreign-made documentary that would never be seen in the States. They did nothing to warrant being made to look like idiots. Rather than making fun of the powerful, Sasha Baron Cohen made fun of the powerless.

On the other hand, there was *The Aristocrats.* I thought that was hysterical. Lots of people did. But I can assure you that, were my father in the theater, he would have walked out after 15 minutes. My mom, on the other hand, would likely love it. Is my father wrong, while everyone is right? No.

You can read entire books on what constitutes comedy. The history of it, the rules, the psychology behind it. Analysis, dissertations, what have you, all trying to answer the age-old question of what makes something funny. Yet really, what it all comes down to is an exchange from the film *A Prairie Home Companion.* In one scene, radio host Garrison Keillor is confronted by a character known as The Dangerous Woman, played by Virginia Madsen. The question at issue is the following joke, which Garrison told during one broadcast:

"Two penguins are standing on an ice floe. The first penguin says, 'You look like you're wearing a tuxedo.' The second penguin says, 'What makes you think I'm not?' "

The Dangerous Woman studies him for a moment and says, "That's it?"

"That's it," he confirms.

"Why is that funny?" she asks him.

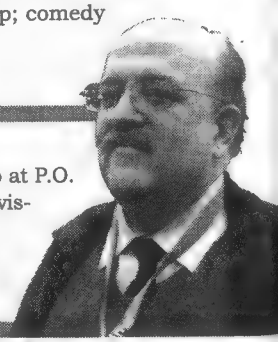
Garrison considers the question a moment. "I guess because people laugh at it."

And that's it right there.

People laugh at it.

The reason that tragedy is easy and comedy is hard is that, with comedy, you're turning over control completely to the audience, whereas with tragedy the creator has the advantage and control. If you have an audience in a theater watching a tragedy or drama, and audience members silent, then they may be enjoying it, they may not. They don't have a great deal of influence on each other. But if they're watching a comedy and they're not laughing, then not only do you know it's a failure, but the audience knows that everyone else knows. Laughter feeds and builds audience enjoyment, but silence at misfired humor crushes it — as Frank Miller found out.

Makers of tragedies control the audience; makers of comedies are controlled by the audience. Tragedy is a dictatorship; comedy is a democracy.



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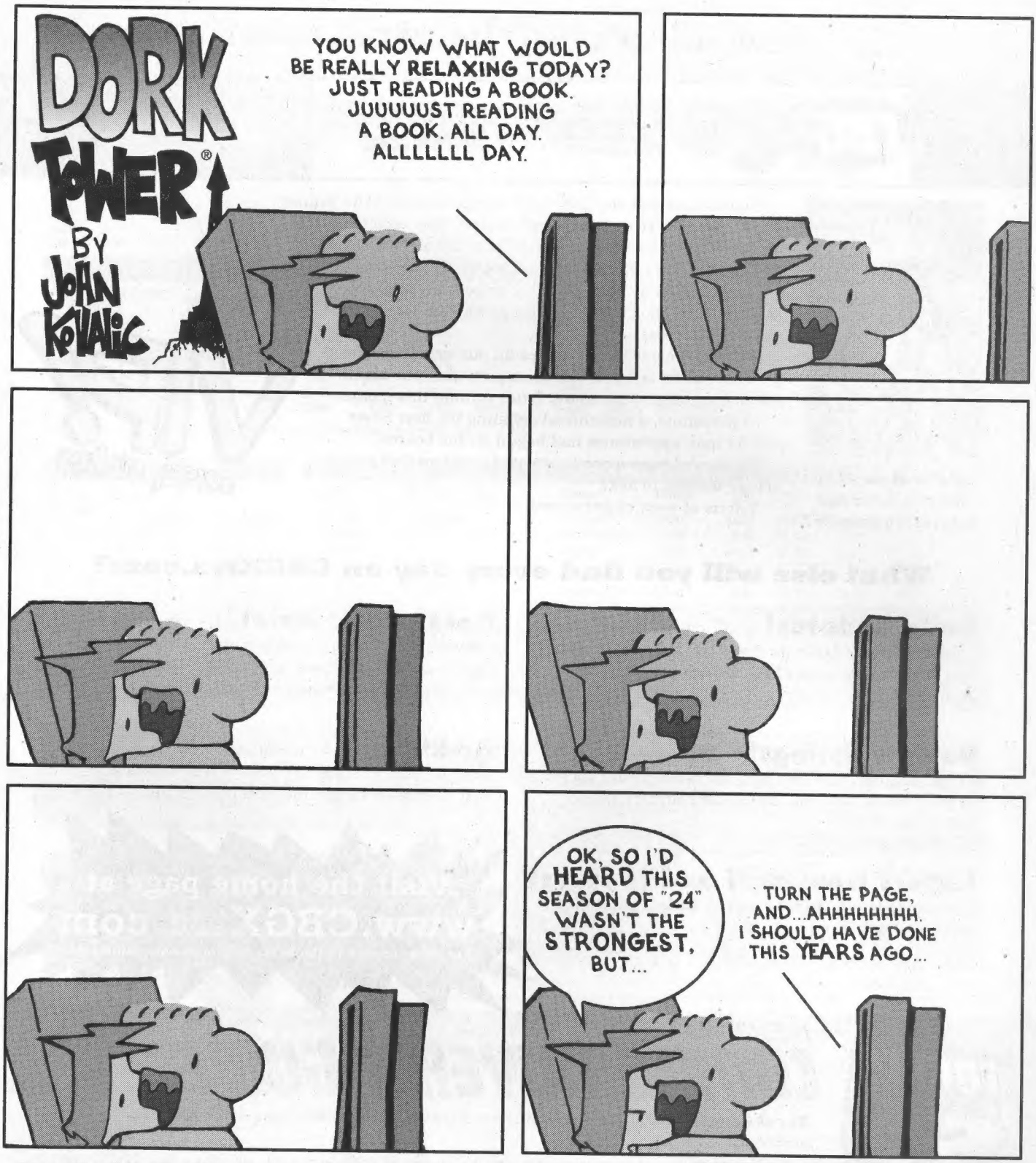
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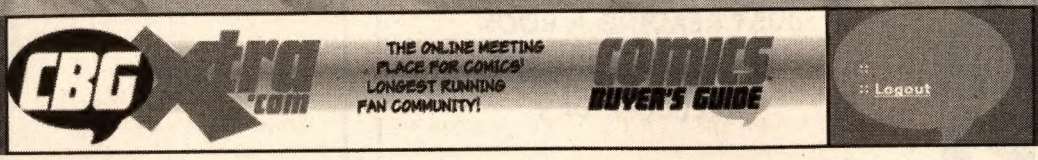

Is* Batman *#105 the first Silver Age Batman appearance?

By the time you see this, we'll have announced the winner of our "Be a V.I.P. in San Diego" contest, who receives a trip for two to the 2009 Comic-Con International: San Diego.

That contest may be over, but we've already got another underway with a weekly prize from the folks at Write Bros. Software. Check our website for complete details!

We've had some lively debates on our website in the past few weeks and you can see a portion of one about Silver Age Suggestions in our letter column this month.

At presstime, a new thread debating the first Silver Age Batman appearance had begun on the boards.

So, do you have a comics-related question that you've always wanted to ask?

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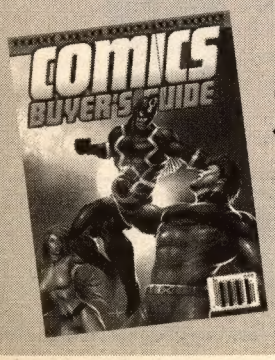

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